



# COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW

## YOUTH & COMMUNITY MEDIA

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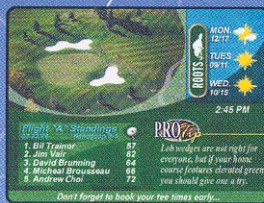
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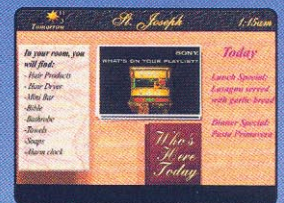
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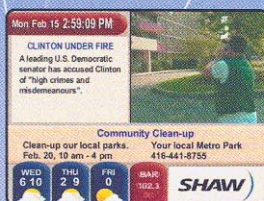
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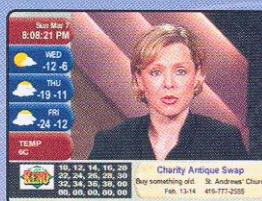
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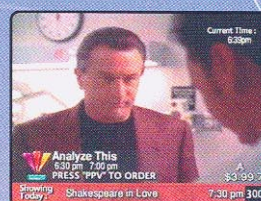
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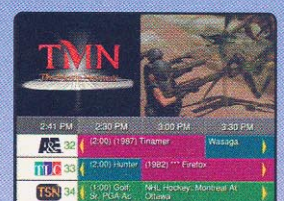
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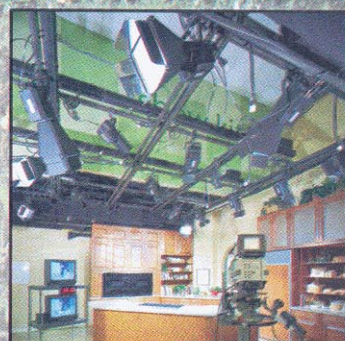
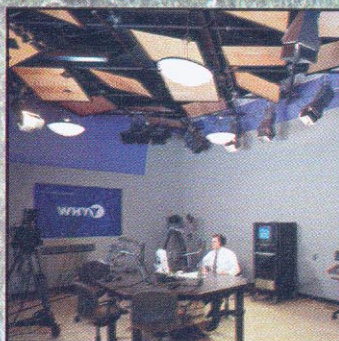
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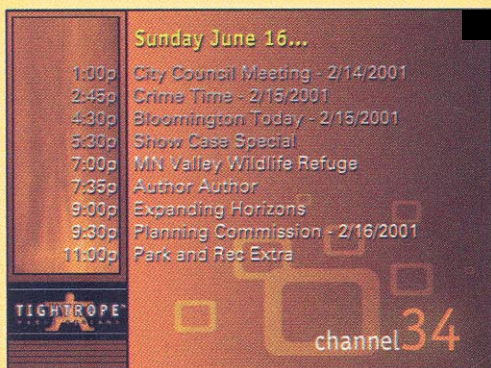


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AUTUMN 2001  
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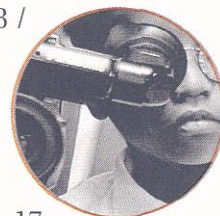
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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.





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## PEG Access: A Community Gathering Place

BY BUNNIE RIEDEL

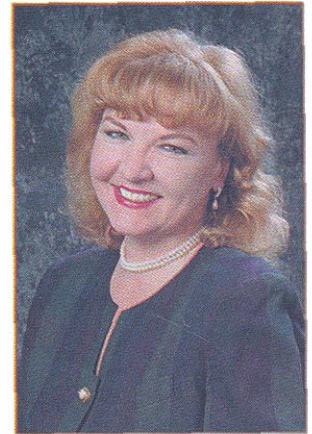
I am proud to be part of the Alliance for Community Media during this difficult time in our nation's history. Over the last few weeks since the terrorists' attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, access centers have been responding to the crisis by hosting community forums, live call-in programming and running bulletin board information to assist various relief efforts. Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access television doesn't attempt to sensationalize these already sensational events, but instead opens its airwaves as a gathering place for all people to come together to exchange information in the community.

The job of access in our communities has taken on new importance as we help agencies, organizations and individuals share information with the public. It may be one of the few media outlets in the country where "alternative" viewpoints may be discussed in non-confrontational and thoughtful ways.

Many access centers currently air programming from various military branches, and this will take on greater importance as regular soliders, reservists and guards are deployed. Agencies such as Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) are producing special programming on topics such as stress, civic safety and emergency response tactics. Relief agencies such as the Red Cross are using access programming and bulletin boards to communicate directly with the public.

The non-stop news coverage of the September 11, 2001 events has its place to be sure and no doubt many of us have been glued to our television sets or radios for the past few weeks. For me, the enormity and repetition of the news has had a mind numbing effect. I have been both captivated by it and completely overwhelmed by it. I now find myself consciously avoiding the news coverage because I don't know how much more I can emotionally process. In the midst of this I am asking friends and acquaintances how their children are faring.

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The responses are as varied as the kids. Pre-schoolers are not as aware of the events but they know something is amiss (this they pick up from their parents). A friend of mine told me her seven year old grandson had refused to go to school for fear that it would be bombed. In his seven year old world there is very little difference between the World Trade Center and his elementary school, both are important institutions that seem impenetrable. The teenagers I have encountered are worried, scared and uncertain, and while these are normal everyday emotions for pre-adults, their angst for the future is not just personal but now it is quite global.

PEG access stands ready to assist our communities' young people in exploring what has happened, giving them tools to communicate and the ability to create responses that make sense to them.

A great many adults feel quite powerless regarding the attacks and our national response, and those feelings of powerlessness are greatly compounded for our younger citizens. Access can act as a catalyst to empower these young people, heighten their awareness of media literacy and offer them the opportunity to be participants in our democratic discourse rather than be mere recipients of pundits and opinion-makers' views.

Access can also help young people explore collateral issues of racism, religion, world affairs and patriotism. And at its most simplistic, creating video for tel-

elevision and the internet directs young energy into positive activity and away from anxiety and its potential for negative behavior.

I have no doubt in the next few months, access centers will be called on to continue to help their communities in assorted ways. At the Alliance for Community Media, we hope to assist you in sharing your projects and contributions within our membership and to the public at large. If you have not already done so, sign up to be on the members listserv ([alliance-announce@lists.alliancecm.org](mailto:alliance-announce@lists.alliancecm.org)) or by going to our website ([www.alliancecm.org](http://www.alliancecm.org)) and following the instructions.

While the terrible events of September 11, 2001 have caused tremendous damage, loss of life and certainly the loss of innocence, now more than ever, we are called on to be strong and do what we do best, that is to "Build Community Through Media."

*Bunnie Riedel is executive director of the Alliance for Community Media. Contact her at [briedel@alliancecm.org](mailto:briedel@alliancecm.org)*



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## 'Talk Amongst Yourselves...'

Information, resources, networking and national office announcements are available day or night. The Alliance hosts two listservs to help you:

The **Access Forum** list is open to anyone interested in community access. To sign-up, interested persons should send a message to: [access-forum-subscribe@lists.alliancecm.org](mailto:access-forum-subscribe@lists.alliancecm.org).

The **Alliance Announce** list is open only to members of the Alliance for Community Media. Members should send a request to: [alliance-announce-subscribe@lists.alliancecm.org](mailto:alliance-announce-subscribe@lists.alliancecm.org). Membership confirmation will be sent back to the interested party. Once returned, it is sent to the national office to confirm membership. Once confirmed, the member will be added to the list.

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## Alliance Truly a Grassroots Organization

BY RIC HAYES

The 25th anniversary conference has come and gone. We have all had time for a refreshing break and then picked up the work we left behind. Most likely the conference glow has faded and the day-to-day workload has once again taken on a life of its own.

As I often do, soon after the conference, I wrote a list of impressions and ideas that result in set of lists of "things to do" and "things that could be improved on next time." As I was reflecting on this conference and others I have attended over the past twenty years, I noted that a major challenge for the Alliance is that this annual event serves so many purposes for the access movement.

Foremost is the training aspect. We expect to hear the latest trends and learn tips to improve our community service. One expressive way to see the diversity of interests of Alliance members is the fact that the conference was organized into seven different tracks offering over fifty different workshops.

There are also the leadership awards and the *Hometown* ceremony, a chance to applaud our fellow members for their hard work and maybe take a pat on the back for the work of our community producers.

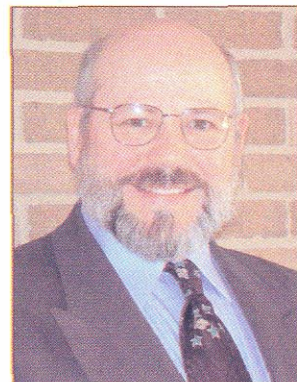
One feature whose success has varied with the venue is the vendor trade show. This year was one of the best in my memory, with over forty-two vendors ready to talk with the access community about their equipment needs.

There is also the opportunity to visit another place on this wondrous planet and enjoy its ambience, whether it's by sightseeing or partaking of the local atmosphere. And since we were at Washington, DC, we took advantage of that with a rally on the steps of the Capitol and visits with the representatives from our own districts.

Perhaps best of all is the chance to come face to face with those we have gotten to know from their postings on the list-serv, or our friends whom we may only see once a year.

And, at the bottom of the list or off the list for some, is the annual members

*...the Alliance is truly a grassroots organization. It was created by people working in the field, not in the lofty ivory tower of idealism, but created with the practical knowledge that the only way for this group to have a national organization was for it to grow itself from the ground up.*



meeting. Those of us who have worked in Alliance leadership positions at the chapter, regional or national level consider that part of the conference to be high on the priority list. We want to gain the participation of more members to ensure that the work we do is meeting their needs.

The reason this is so important is that the Alliance is truly a grassroots organization. It was created by people working in the field, not in the lofty ivory tower of idealism, but created with the practical knowledge that the only way for this group to have a national organization was for it to grow itself from the ground up. We needed a national expression of our mission if this organization was to reach its potential.

The form of governance we have is a representative one. The bylaws changes of 1997 opened the doors wider by enabling the entire membership to vote on election of national board members and any other proposed action via the paper ballot. But most of us rely on our elected representatives to speak for the perspective of our region, or access center.

But one piece of work that was introduced at the national members meeting needs everyone's attention, the affiliation agreement. This seemingly arcane piece of legislation will clarify the relationship between national and region and chapter. It is intended to tighten the reporting mechanism from the region to the national so we can complete the annual reports to the IRS. It is not intended to change the balance of power in the organization.

We have never been an institution that blindly followed the direction of the national office, and there is no intent to

change that. Instead we need to find ways to increase the level of activity at the chapter and the region level so we can improve our service to all those interested in use of media for community building purposes.

In many ways the regional or state chapter is the ideal place for increased activity. That is why the national board is asking you to discuss the affiliation agreement at your regional and chapter conferences.

As you discuss the proposed agreement I hope that your conversations will go further. The agreement deals mostly with the administrative aspects of regions and chapters but we need to review and find new ways to stimulate the diversity within. Currently we have special interest groups (SIGs) and caucuses, but they are not linked to the structure of the organization as powerfully as they could be. It is time to strengthen this organization by entwining our diversity into the daily functions of the Alliance.

Like many other long-time Alliance members I am always amazed at the resilience and determination of the Access community. We have survived many challenges and grown in many ways.

Creating the means to continue to expand that growth and increase the reach of the Alliance will help everyone interested in harnessing technology to serve human needs.

*Ric Hayes is chairman of the Alliance for Community Media and executive director of Community Access Partners of San Buenaventura, CA. Contact him at rhayes48@juno.com.*



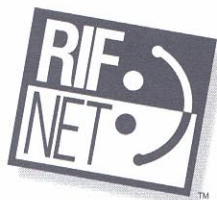
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# 11 September 2001

*Our hearts are in pain,  
but our spirits are not broken.*



In the midst of developing this issue of *Community Media Review*, the national tragedy of September 11th occurred. Families, friends, and neighbors throughout the country turned to the internet, and to their TV sets and radios, seeking information. And Access centers around the country responded—by reaching out to their communities through a variety of activities, such as forums designed to talk about the events of that week, and programming on topics such as violence in communities, cultural diversities, and emergency preparedness.

We commend you all for your step forward in this tragic, confusing time and dedicate this issue to you. Your efforts underscore the theme presented in this issue—that “the future of community media is in very good hands.”

We developed this theme in recognition of the ever-developing strength of the Alliance, which was so aptly demonstrated at this year’s national conference, and the strength of youth media programs across the United States.

In this issue: **Lin Gold** describes Dallas Community Television’s youth program curriculum that combines critical analysis of both mainstream and alternative media, with hands-on production of skill-building projects. **Jeanesa Ramos** extols the accomplishments of the Youth Channel, a channel entirely run and governed by youth. **Paula Kowalczyk** profiles Street-Level Youth Media’s efforts to promote Chicago’s inner-city youths’ self-expression, communication and social change. **Marshall Parker** offers his take on the elements of a successful youth program, with snapshots of two award-winning Houston MediaSource’s producers penned by **Pat Garlinghouse**. **Susan Lawrence**’s article offers an overview of Malden Access Television’s agenda for guiding teens in the development of leadership skills through video production. **Jeff Smith** reflects on two Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy (GRIID) youth projects conducted the past year through the Community Media Center. **Ginny Berkowitz** re-caps Cambridge Community Television’s eleven year involvement in youth programming, with a close look at CCTV’s Summer Media Institute composed by **Natasha Friedus**. And **Bill Nay** and **Daria Nay** reveal a personal account on planning and participating in the Alliance’s Youth Media Camp. A resource list of youth producer festivals follows.

Also in this issue are reports and pictures from this year’s conference in Washington, DC, including the keynote address by former FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani.

Our thanks to everyone who helped develop this issue.

— Betty Francis and Jennifer Krebs, Co-Editors-in-Chief

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*Betty Francis has been involved in educational access for the last fifteen years as a writer, producer, and station manager. In her current role as an IT planning analyst for Montgomery College, she assists in the development of joint initiatives for Maryland’s Montgomery County PEG Network. She served on the Alliance’s Planning Committee for the Youth Media Camp at the 2001 Conference. She can be reached at 240.314.3141 or [bfrancis@mc.cc.md.us](mailto:bfrancis@mc.cc.md.us).*

*Jennifer Krebs was government access coordinator for the City of Enumclaw and acting director of Puget Sound Access, both in Washington State. She is currently a first year law student at the University of Washington.*

## YOUTH & COMMUNITY MEDIA

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# Youth in Media

## It Begins with Media Literacy at Dallas Community Television

*'Media Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and produce media in a variety of forms.'*

— The Aspen Institute Leadership Forum on Media Literacy, December 1992.

BY LIN GOLD

Media permeates every aspect of our lives. It affects decisions about what we eat, how we dress, how we vote. Individuals who are media literate understand the impact of visual and auditory messages. They are better prepared to intelligently analyze and evaluate information, rather than simply accept any form of media as fact. In an information age, a media literate populace forms the basis of a democratic society.

Young people now have more media making resources than ever, but they don't always know how to use those resources well, and very few youth have any experience with critical analysis of media. Dallas Community Television, Inc. (DCTV) has long recognized how the grassroots nature of community access, coupled with the concept of access to the media as a First Amendment right, is a natural companion to media literacy.

DCTV began offering limited hands-on media production training for youth in 1990. Since that time, DCTV has implemented a curriculum that combines critical analysis of both mainstream and alternative media, with hands-on production of a series of short skill-building media projects. This combination gets students thinking about media in a new way. It gives them the analytical skills to determine what they like about a particular television show or film, encourages them to think about how they might use those same techniques in their own work, and gives



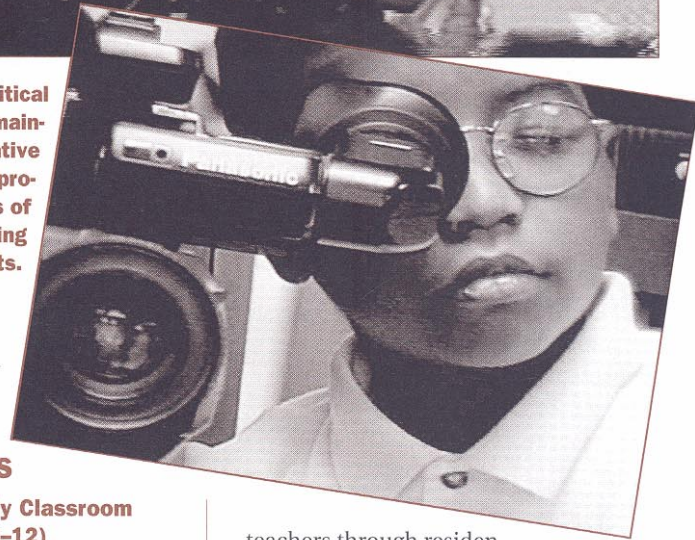
**DCTV combines critical analysis of both mainstream and alternative media with hands-on production of a series of short skill-building media projects.**

them the practical production tools to express their ideas.

### THE PROGRAMS

#### **Mobile Community Classroom (grades 3–12)**

In 1993, DCTV designed the award-winning Mobile Community Classroom (MCC), a mobile production studio, field production equipment and a full-time staff position dedicated to media education outreach. While teachers may bring their students to DCTV's studios for training, DCTV makes onsite media literacy training available to students and



teachers through residencies of varied lengths through the MCC program. Staff members provide instruction in media analysis, studio production, portable video production and editing. The Mobile Community Classroom has touched the lives of thousands of children through schools, community organizations, arts festivals and in-house workshops. Programs

*...the grassroots nature of community access, coupled with the concept of access to the media as a First Amendment right, is a natural companion to media literacy.*



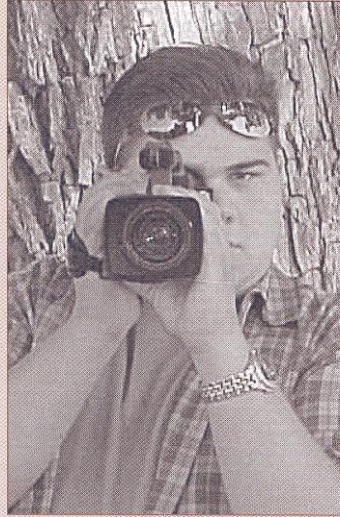
# Profiles in Youth Media

## CHRIS TONICK

Chris Tonick, 18, is a freshman at college. He is studying film. He joined DCTV's Explorer Post 1253 when he was sixteen years old, and has been president of the post for the last year. This summer he was hired as an intern for the Summer Video Camp program.

How has learning media analysis affected him? "I view media differently now. I think about the processes that go into it. You can tell by the way a director lights a scene what it is they're trying to say. I have a rich and deep viewing experience because I realize that it's not just to be taken at surface value. When I sit in my media analysis class (in college), I think, hey I already know this stuff."

What has he learned about production? "Everything. When I first started at DCTV, I had no idea how to light a scene or use professional cameras. All I had was a home video camera. It was great to learn how to edit and shoot. Invaluable stuff – I don't know where else I would have picked it up."

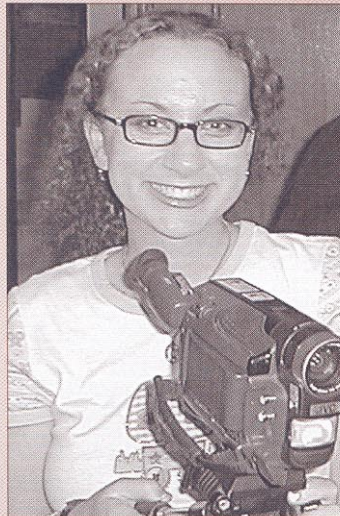


## DANA ARCHIP

Dana Archip has participated in Explorer Post 1253 for the last two years. She is a senior at Arlington High School and plans to become a professional animator. Dana was also an intern for DCTV's Summer Video Camp program this summer.

What's her take on the impact of studying media analysis? "I definitely think it's had an impact on how I view media. It makes me think about what I'm watching, and before I just watched. Now I watch very critically. I notice all the lights, the cuts and especially the improper breaks in a show."

Dana tried her hand at producing short films with her younger brother Jason, before coming to DCTV. He is a real technical whiz kid, so Dana always focused on the creative aspect and let Jason take care of the technical side. "I learned so much about production, seriously. Before I did Summer Video Camp and the Explorer Post I didn't know how to wrap cable or even plug a microphone into a camera. I may not be the best, but I know the basics. It's amazing, after repeating it over and over, I actually know what I'm doing."



produced by DCTV's students have won top honors in the *Dallas Video Festival* and the *USA Film Festival's Kids in the Director's Chair*.

### Explorer Post 1253 (ages 14–21)

Youth from across the region receive media literacy training and production experience by joining Explorer Post 1253. The Explorers meet for training sessions and participate as crew members for community television programs. Each spring, Explorers run the Animation Station booth at the Kennedy Center Imagination Celebration, teaching ages four to adult simple stop-motion claymation. This program is presented in conjunction with The Boy Scouts of America, Circle Ten Council.

### Young Producers' Group (ages 9–13)

The Young Producers' Group (YPG) is for youth interested in media production. The YPG provides media literacy training and production experience and has proved to be an excellent way for home-schoolers to participate in DCTV's programs.

### Girl Scout Video Production Badges (Cadets)

This is a special one-day workshop for Girl Scouts to earn a badge in video production. Participants work together to script and shoot a multiple camera production in DCTV's Studio B.

### Summer Video Camp (June–August, ages 9–16)

Youth in this program learn the ins and outs of video production through one-week day camps. There is a strong emphasis on media analysis. By the end of camp, youth in this program are able to script, produce, direct and perform their own community television program for cablecast on DCTV channels.

### Internships

DCTV offers select students interested in media production as a career internships in Summer Video Camp and at DCTV's Roundtable Studios.

Dallas Community Television encourages all Dallas citizens to become involved. There are so many aspects for the community, the young and the not so young, to explore. If you're interested in learning more about DCTV: you can call us at 214.631.5571 or write to us at Dallas Community Television, 1253 Round Table, Dallas, TX 75247.

*Lin Gold is the media education program director at Dallas Community Television. She can be reached at [collaboratory@earthlink.net](mailto:collaboratory@earthlink.net).*



# Youth Channel Changing Forever the Way Media Is Viewed in Manhattan

by Jeanesa Ramos

*T*he Youth Channel, a channel entirely run and governed by youth, is changing the way media is viewed forever.

Through the financial support of the Open Society Institute (OSI), the Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) developed the Youth Channel to provide equal access to all young people, empower youth to believe they are capable of creating change within their communities and the world, and better serve their youth demographic.

Before that time, there was no outlet in the Manhattan area for youth to show their work and have others recognize their talent. MNN recognized the need for a distribution vehicle for youth-produced work. They also realized that the channel not only needed to exclusively air youth work, but also needed to empower youth as the primary decision makers.

Anthony Riddle, MNN's executive director, has seen the channel grow in the past year and is delighted with the results. "It's great to see youth empowered to make their own decisions," says Riddle of the channel's precedent-setting governance structure.

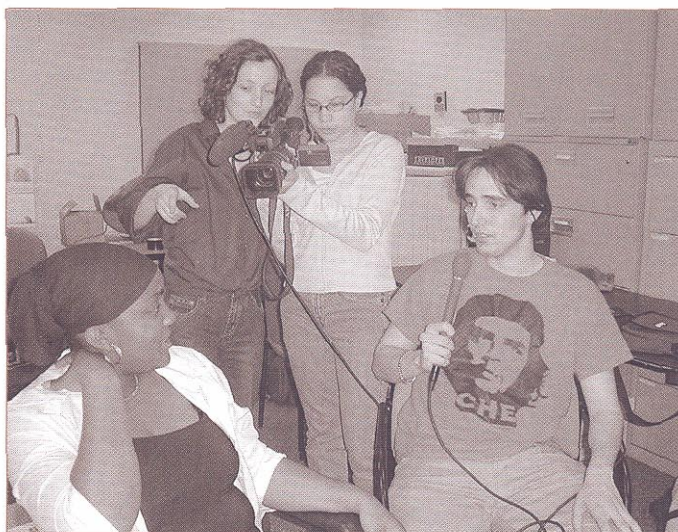
Kone Mamadou, a youth producer, acknowledges the strength of media and is grateful for the opportunities the Youth Channel provides, "I'm glad that there's a place like the Youth Channel, where I can be free to express myself, where there are no barriers."

The Youth Channel (YC) strives to encourage its members to have a social-political conscience by engaging them in activities that pique their curiosity about current events and culture. They create newscasts, documentaries, movies, and other forms of media. Internet technology has allowed youth-produced media to advance rapidly.

Through the internet, youth are able to show their work online through webcasting, emailing, downloading, etc. The Youth Channel recognized the power of this medium and launched the *youthchannel.org* website, which now features several short videos, and a 24-hour live stream where viewers can watch the Youth Channel online from anywhere in the world. It also features a community calendar, Youth Channel news, links to media resources and organizations, and the YC television schedule.

Through this video streaming technology, youth have gained increased exposure and recognition by enabling viewers from all over the world to observe their work.

Recently, YC has initiated two exciting ventures: the National Youth Media Access Project and the Durban Diaries: Youth Fight Racism project.



**Clockwise from above, students in a Youth Channel production workshop; Project Director Hye-Jung Park; Board Member Alexia Myers; Outreach Director Jeanesa Ramos; and Peer Trainer Kone Mamadou.**



The National Youth Media Access Project is a youth-based program network that was initiated in an effort to bring youth-produced media to the entire country. The Youth Channel has chosen four distinguished public access centers representing both the demographic and geographic diversity of the country, each committed to strengthening local support for the youth perspective in their communities, to commence the project, which was funded by a grant from OSI. The Youth Channel hopes to continually enlarge the network to afford media access to all youth.

YC's latest project, *Durban Diaries: Youth Fight Racism*, takes Youth Channel producers to Durban, South Africa. YC plans to attend the World Conference Against Racism and to participate in the conference in a unique and refreshing way—through incorporating video and Internet technologies to bring viewers daily video and youth diary passages that describe the conference, their individual experiences, and their feelings about racism. Viewers can track the conference delegates' journey through the *youthchannel.org* website.

The Youth Channel has initiated partnerships with several organizations like Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Global Kids, and several other national and international organizations for our *Durban Diaries: Youth Fight Racism*. We expect this conference to have a lasting, life-altering effect on us all.

*Jeanesa Ramos is a freelance writer and the outreach coordinator for the Youth Channel. She can be reached at [jeanesa@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanesa@hotmail.com).*



# Chicago's Street-Level Youth Media

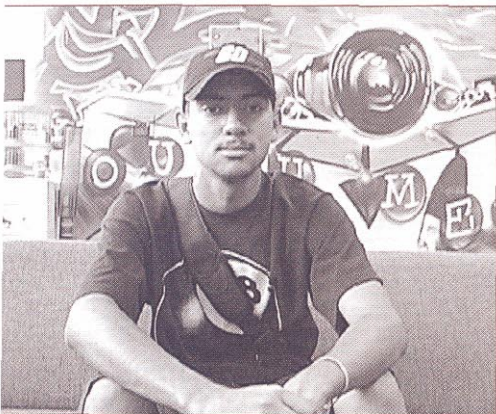
**What if young people had access to video cameras to document the world as they saw it?**

BY PAULA KOWALCZYK

For years, in cities all over America, people with good intentions have tried to solve the many problems that plague low-income communities—violence, anger, greed, neglect. Often times, the problems loom large and the real building blocks—ideas, dreams, and opportunities—are ignored or forgotten. As artists who cared deeply for the youth in the city of Chicago, we wanted to create a place that was different, a place where ideas lead to actions and actions create change. Street-Level is that place.

Our mission statement is our source for inspiration:

Street-Level Youth Media educates Chicago's inner-city youth in media arts and emerging technologies for use in self-expression, communication and social change. Street-Level's programs build self-esteem and critical thinking skills for urban youth who have been historically neglected by policy makers and



**I do like coming to Street-Level because the environment is fun. Also, it's a good place to meet different people. My favorite thing to do here at Street-Level is working in Photoshop because it's a good technique to learn.**

— Jose Moran, 18

mass media. Using video production, computer art and the Internet, Street-Level's young people address community issues, access advanced communication technology and gain inclusion in our information-based society.

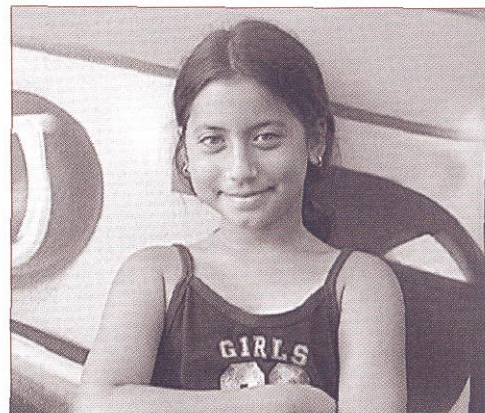
In 2001, more than eighteen hundred youth in neighborhoods across Chicago will participate in Street-Level's many programs.

Everything that Street-Level is today started from a simple idea. What if young people had access to video cameras to document the world as they saw it? What stories would they tell? What could they teach us? Teens from Chicago's Wells High School took the idea and ran with it. That first summer, they made forty videos about everything from gangs, to their families, to the gradual gentrification of their neighborhood. They threw a giant community block party and installed their video projects on seventy monitors up and down the street. This first Street-Level Block Party drew national attention and inspired an entire community to celebrate the talents and dreams of their youngest residents.

With the success of this first effort, a new idea arose. What if there was a place in the neighborhood where Street-Level students could teach other kids how to make videos? What if there was a safe place to come in off the street and actually do something about the problems. That place was the first Street-Level storefront. Located across the street from Wells High School and on a corner where four gang lines converge, the storefront became known throughout the city as "that video place run by kids."

In fact, Street-Level's first pilot program, *Neutral Ground*, demonstrated how media could transform a community. Using video cameras to create a series of video letters, rival gangs who had never spoken face-to-face developed a dialogue about identity. Through video, they taught each other how to communicate and for at least a short while, a truce was brokered between the opposing factions. In the process, it taught the community to see these youth as real human beings trapped in a desperate, life-threatening position.

In time, more ideas emerged. What if



**My favorite thing to do at Street-Level is to go to Girls' Group because you get to do lots of activities, make movies with the camera, make up stories, and talk to each other.**

— Gloria Cerda, 8

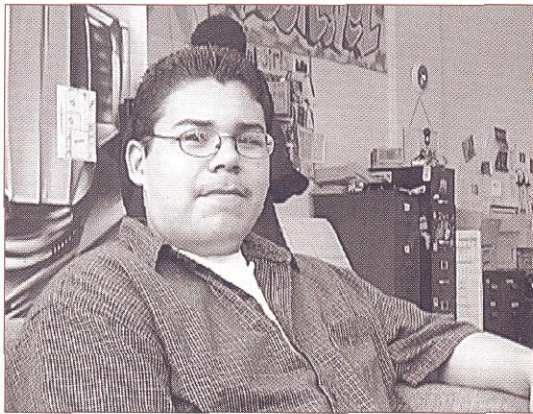
we started defining media in a broader sense? How could today's new technologies be used to tell stories? With just one outdated Apple computer, Street-Level members began building web pages about themselves and their community. Without realizing it, Street-Level became one of the first organizations in the country to offer new technology access to urban kids, free of charge. This idea caught on in a big way and before long, the storefront had a lab of computers intended for new forms of story telling. Graphic art, audio manipulation, digital video and the Internet were new fron-



**I first heard about SLYM from the '99 Block Party. I started coming to SLYM two years ago. My favorite thing to do here is chatting online.**

— Lyuda Podolyanyuk, 17





**I first heard about SLYM from a local crossing guard. I started coming last December 2000. My favorite thing to do is go on the Internet to chat and play games.**

**— Jonathon Torres, 16**

tiers for community advocacy and interactive learning.

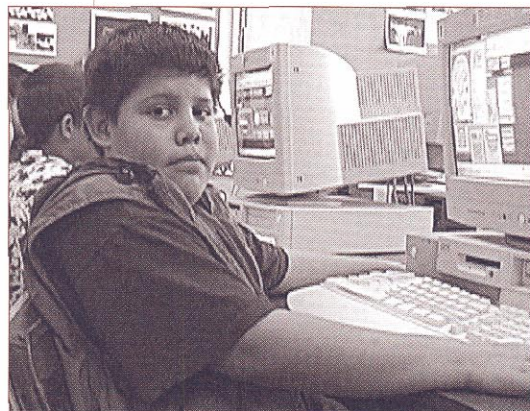
Street-Level's founders were then faced with a new challenge. How could the agency ensure that its mission had a broader, lasting impact? How could Street-Level be used as a model not only for how to reinvent media, but to redefine what it means to be a community-based arts organization? In 1995, Street-Level incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation with diversity at the core of its foundation. The organization assembled a talented group of staff, board and volunteers members representing many backgrounds, cultures and perspectives, drawing from the community, corporate and artistic worlds. Street-Level staff, both program and administrative, has always consisted of professionally trained artists whose diversity reflects the city's cultural and immigrant populations. Street-Level designed a management structure that would insure programmatic and fiscal accountability. Street-Level has no executive director. Instead, five co-directors supervise various facets of the organization under a shared management model. Each co-director brings a unique palette of experiences, contacts, skills and exposure that creates a continual dialogue of new ideas.

In addition, Street-Level has always been run using a sound business strategy. One third of its support is generated from earned income for hard work and quality programs, requiring the development of collaborations that fur-

ther expand the scope of the agency. Remaining support comes in the form of grants and in-kind donations from government agencies, foundations, corporations and individuals. Today, Street-Level develops drop-in programs at neighborhood multimedia labs that provide access to computers, the internet, video production and editing facilities. The organization seeks special projects that offer media making employment opportunities in collaboration

with recognized cultural institutions throughout Chicago and beyond. The agency also partners with the Chicago Public Schools to create in-school programs that model integrated arts curriculum working with classroom teachers to weave media into existing course work. Program participants are encouraged to access the agency's website ([www.street-level.org](http://www.street-level.org)) to post their latest projects, express their ideas, and explore the media artwork of youth from outside of their communities.

Most importantly, Street-Level has created an environment that includes youth in the process. It has developed staff positions for alumni participants and a series of teaching assistant positions where younger youth can learn the ropes. On its own and by partnering with the city, the agency has been able to create job programs that pay out more than \$80,000 in youth salaries and stipends annually. Since 1999, in partnership with Columbia College Chicago's Office of Community Arts Partnership, Street-



**I was passing by Street-Level and saw a bunch of kids inside so I went in. I like coming to Street-Level because I can go on the Internet, learn Photoshop and go to the Boy's Group.**

**— Adrian Torres, 11**

Level has been able to send youth to college through an annual Columbia College Scholarship awarded to a program participant showing initiative and commitment to continued learning. To date, Street-Level has four Columbia College scholars.

Despite the agency's unique business



**I first heard about Street-Level from going to its annual Block Party. I started coming to SLYM two years ago. My favorite thing to do here is to sit around and relax.**

**— Kassia Cerda, 13**

model, it is still quite a challenge to find the resources to make its various programs possible. Part of the difficulty lies in acquiring and maintaining the equipment that makes media arts making possible. These days, it is relatively easy to get older computer equipment donated to the organization, but no one has ever stepped forward with an offer to upgrade Street-Level's original video equipment. Street-Level has been fortunate, up to this point, in being able to reinvest in its equipment needs that are essential to its efforts, and in bringing its work back full circle to its roots—give kids a camera and witness the stories they share.

*Paula Kowalczyk is the development director at Street Level Video. She can be reached at [pkowalc@yahoo.com](mailto:pkowalc@yahoo.com).*

*The youth quotes under the photographs were taken from interviews prepared by Street-Level Youth Media participants Edda Meza, age twenty and Gloria Cerda, age eight. Ms. Meza has been a Street-Level youth leader since 1999 and works with the agency's staff to facilitate its pre-teen and teen girls program. Most recently Ms. Meza has been awarded, in collaboration with Columbia College Chicago, Street-Level's Annual College Scholarship and will begin school in the fall of 2001.*



# Secrets of Success for Effective Youth Media

## Avoiding the Pitfalls to Bring All the Elements in the Equation Together

BY MARSHALL PARKER

*H*ouston is a city with great need for media literacy classes. And as we have seen in many cities, limited budgets have restrained local schools from developing such programs, or in some cases, have had to eliminate those begun.

### **PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE RESCUE!**

At Houston MediaSource (HMS) we have the beginnings of a very robust and fruitful youth program. And we've have had our share of shining success (as you'll see from Pat Garlinghouse's article on the following page about two of our bright rising stars) and disappointments. Based on these experiences, here's my take on what it takes to bring youth programs to fruition.

### **DEDICATION**

Someone in the host organization must take the responsibility to see that the simple logistics of arranging classes are met. It may seem like a small thing, but if there is no one there to unlock the door, see that the air conditioner is turned on or that there is even a room available, the possibilities of reaching goals are slim.

In one program, there was a need for an adult to physically bring the students to the class. This program was an after-school project and the organization is one that requires an adult supervisor for all activities. There was a real problem in finding an adult who wanted to be involved with video production. There isn't always a video equivalent to the "soccer mom."

### **DESIRE**

The students have to want to. Sounds simple doesn't it? But we have found that in some circumstances there are students who have no idea why they are there. Why were they not asked?

Media classes have to be fun. If the student isn't having fun, then they are bored and lack the desire to participate. This can be restrictive to other students as well.

In the case of one organization that is dedicated to giving at-risk teens living in an inner city environment an alternative to gangs and criminal behavior, sports activities have been made the primary focus. When they realized that not all kids are good at sports, the light bulb went off that perhaps these young people should become videographers and videotape all of the sports events!

But let me point out the fallacy of this logic. Simply because a person is not good at sports does not mean that they are interested in developing video production skills. There may be a possibility there but some screening needs to be done so neither the student or instructor's time is wasted.

### **INSTRUCTORS**

There is a need for dedicated and talented instructors. Someone who is very good at video production is not necessarily good at teaching youth. There are some really good technical people who do not know how to communicate to young people.

There is a special talent involved in retaining the interest of our Extreme X generation. This is a job for someone who knows how to deal with today's youth, including some that may have a different set of problems. Great understanding must be given to

each child as to what they have to overcome to be successful. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of such instructors.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Appropriate equipment must be available to teach the students. Many students have experience with camcorders. This type of equipment is abundant in the American homes of many income levels. Camcorders are quite portable and available in the case of most access centers.

The real dearth is in editing equipment. Certainly there is some teaching that can be done in production utilizing camcorders only. The concept of "editing in the camera" has some value. But the real payoff is in a well-edited piece of which a student can be proud.

The advent of an "editing system in a box" has made this part of the equation easier to some degree. Products by Applied Magic and Casablanca allow the portable video instructor more latitude. We have acquired two such units and have had great success. But the cost per unit is \$2,000-\$5,000. Add to it a monitor and a recording deck and you are talking about a sizeable investment.

Most of our partners cannot afford the cost or the space for editing equipment. This has been the case in our facility. While we are centrally located in Houston, the city is large and our space is limited.

### **GOALS**

Many times the administrator of a partnership organization is not truly media literate and has no understanding of video production. They set their sights on unreasonable expectations for youth producers. We have tried to set goals initially for short form projects, such as public service announcements (PSAs). Putting together a tight 30-second program requires many of the elements of longer form projects but are within the reach of extra curricular youth students. Youth production of PSAs is where we have the most success.

### **TIME**

Ah! The commodity of which no one seems to have enough. We have seen some prospective partners who want to have a youth program for video production once or twice per month. I think that you can see the error in their thinking. There is no time to develop continuity with this type of schedule.

### **PLAN TO SUCCEED**

So how do you to make the equation work? Taken from the viewpoint of possible pitfalls, I see the equation as this:

*Interested students + Dedicated program administration + Talented instructors + Adequate time and equipment + Realistic Goals = Successful Youth Producers.*

The underlying theme is that good communication is important. You must educate your partners and develop an agreement that creates room for everyone to succeed.

*Marshall Parker is program development director at Houston MediaSource. Contact him at [marshallp@houston-mediasource.org](mailto:marshallp@houston-mediasource.org).*

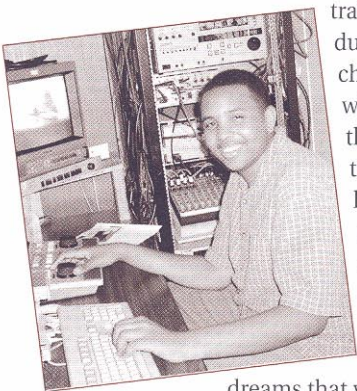


# Youth Program a Success at Houston MediaSource

BY PAT GARLINGHOUSE

*"The frustration of being trapped in infancy. Lying flat on my back, all I could see was the ceiling. Agitated, restless, and completely unable to utter a single word, I wanted more than anything to have a pillow beneath my head. A simple pillow, which I just knew was in the next room, would put my uneasy mind to rest. I cried and was coddled back to sleep only to awake again to find nothing under my head. All my mother heard was unfocused noise bellowing from her sleepless child, but I knew what I meant. All I needed was the language to tell her. This is my earliest memory from childhood, and in many ways I am still the same child."*

Thus begins the long successful career of Justin Simien, one of Houston MediaSource's youth producers. As he deals with all of his frustra-



tions during childhood without the 'clout' to make himself understood, Justin now dreams

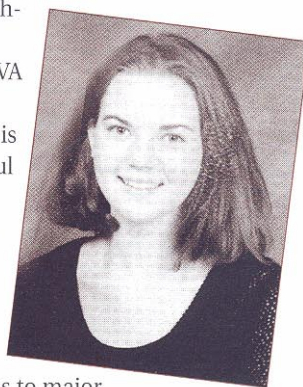
dreams that would amaze even Stanley Kubrick or Tim Burton. Of his expectations from Chapman University, CA (where he now lives as a film directing freshman student) Justin says with gusto, "I want my eyes to be opened again through the people around me and the art I experience. I want to understand the fundamentals, from storyboarding to editing; I want to learn it all."

Justin is a 2001 graduate of the Houston High School for the Performing and Visual Arts' (HSPVA) Theatre program and packs in performances of approximately nine plays from Shakespeare to Andrew Lloyd-Webber. Justin directed two productions, includ-

ing *When the Spirits Gather*, a piece he adapted to the stage. He has directed dozens of commercial ads for his school's theatre department and yearbook staff. Just prior to graduation, Justin picked up two gold medals for his film, *The Gift*, from both the local and national NAACP ACT-SO competition. Justin is majoring in film directing at Chapman University, CA this fall."

Allison Smith, also a student intern, is a senior technical theater major at HSPVA this year.

Although she is very successful in theater as an actress, as well as in technical theater, her true love is



film. She plans to major in film production in college. Winning the PBS *American High Contest* for video really gave her film career a jumpstart. Allison is busy working on two major projects. She is producing a public service announcement, plus an informational video for LIFE Houston, an organization that helps needy babies, for her Girl Scout Gold Award, and she is working on her ten-minute video for submission to the national A.R.T.S. competition for high school students. In her spare time, Allison works at Houston MediaSource, the public access channel in Houston. Allison "feels blessed to have access to such great equipment and to work with people who have so much knowledge about media."

Pat Garlinghouse is executive director of Houston MediaSource. She can be reached at [patg@houston-mediasource.org](mailto:patg@houston-mediasource.org).

## Youth Produce Award-Winning PSAs at HMS

As president of the film club at HSPVA, Justin and his gang won an award for 'Best PSA' from My Varsity Television for *Got Smoke*, produced at Houston MediaSource. HMS receives funding for youth produced PSAs from Manhattan-based Listen Up!, a national network of over sixty youth media organizations helping youth use media to articulate their ideas and experiences in their own voices.

Austin Haeberle, the group's director, is "proud to congratulate the youth producers from Houston MediaSource. *Got Smoke* is an example of a PSA that uses wit and creativity to deal with an important subject. It is a strong contribution to Listen Up!'s mission to support youth voices in the mass media, contributing to a culture of free speech and social responsibility."

Inspired by the youth leaders at HSPVA, other summer students produced PSAs about child abuse, not drinking and driving, graffiti, adopt-a-pet, helping the homeless, not walking home alone, stopping the violence, and stopping smoking. Listen Up! distributed thirteen youth-produced PSAs from HMS this year.

The future of video is in very good hands.

*Editor's note: Listen Up! was featured in the Spring 2001 issue of Community Media Review [Access & Media Education]. For more information about the organization, visit their website at [www.listenup.org](http://www.listenup.org).*



# This Is Not My Life!

## Youth Media Projects in Grand Rapids, Michigan Tackle Media Bias

BY JEFF SMITH

If you spend anytime listening to politicians these days or watching television news you might be inclined to think that today's youth are more dangerous than ever. Author Mike Males, who has written several books on the public's perception of teens, says that adults have been demonizing the current generation of youth like none before them. (Males' books include *The Scapegoat Generation*, *Framing Youth*, *Smoked* and *Kids & Guns*.)

To counteract this bias, we have begun programs for youth at the Grand Rapids [MI] Community Media Center (CMC) that lets them speak for themselves through media. What follows are some reflections on two youth projects that the CMC's Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy (GRIID) has conducted in the past year.

### That's not my body.

Researchers have been reporting for years now that girls as young as six are engaged in dieting because they think they are too fat (see *Deadly Persuasion: Why Women and Girls Must Fight the Addictive Power of Advertising*, by Jean Kilbourne, Free Press, 1999). While not the only factor, images of women and girls in commercial media have contributed significantly to girls'/women's perception of what they should look like. Our project, the Young Women's Media Project, sought to change that perception by working with girls from sixth to eighth grade through a grant we received from the NOKOMIS Foundation.

We developed a six-session project that would incorporate media literacy with TV production. The first session was devoted exclusively to looking and discussing media representations of girls and women. We used TV shows, movies, magazine ads and video game examples that the girls could critique. The rest of the sessions were devoted to TV production, but media literacy was always woven into the technical training to re-



Girls critique ads and gender representation with insights that would make Gloria Steinem proud.

enforce the points made in the first session.

The girls quickly found out which ones wanted to run the cameras, audio and direct the production and who would be in front of the camera. They decided on a talk-show format named the *Liviane Show*, which came from half of each of the talk-show hosts Stephanie and Livy. The show was a straight forward discussion on magazine ads and female representation. The girls took turns holding up ads and deconstructing them with tremendous confidence and clarity. The show was then aired on public access channel GRTV for a month.

In the evaluations of the project we got great feedback. One question that was asked was "What did you like most about the project?" One girl responded "I liked being able to associate with other girls that have the same concerns." Another question we asked was "Do you think that you will look at the media differently?" One response was "Definitely. It makes me a lot madder now."

### Representing Ourselves.

The other project that we have been coordinating with youth is the Media & Racial Representation Project. With this project the youth are high school students from the public school system, most of which have been involved in the Youth March for Justice. For two years students have been organizing other stu-

dents to confront racial injustice in their schools and communities. Throwing popular media into the mix seemed like a natural.

So far, twelve students have gone through the project, which again includes a media literacy session and production classes. In the media literacy session we looked at both entertainment media and news racial representation. The focus was primarily on local news since we have conducted numerous studies over the past three years ([www.griid.org/griidreports.shtml](http://www.griid.org/griidreports.shtml)) and had lots of video examples to use. In their

evaluations, many expressed the importance of being able to "detect some of the very subtle ways that the news media perpetuates racism."

The first group trained used the opportunity to produce a short video that was used at their county-wide Racism Summit held in May 2001. Two hundred fifty students and fifty adults viewed the video at the beginning of the Summit, which helped to set the tone. The video was a taking it to the streets approach where interviews were conducted with other youth on their perceptions and experiences with racism. The youth video, along with a number of skits they preformed, were taped and aired on GRTV later that month.

As of this writing the second group of students has just been trained. Their project idea is to document the September 2001 Youth March for Justice to air on GRTV. They also will work with GRIID to document the commercial media coverage of the March and then try to respond creatively to the news coverage of the event. One participant suggested that we try to interview the news people who covered the event. Stay tuned!

*Jeff Smith is the GRIID affiliate director at the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He can be reached at [jsmith@grcmc.org](mailto:jsmith@grcmc.org).*



# Teens Put the Message into the Medium at Malden's Cable Access TV Studio

BY SUSAN LAWRENCE

People old enough to remember Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland as teenage movie stars will also remember the magic of the phrase, "Hey, let's put on a show!"

Today's teens are just as moved by the magic inherent in collaborating and in performance. Many have a keen sense of the media's potential power to inform and convince—evidenced by the cable programs they produce that demonstrate a heartfelt response to social issues, and sometimes, a surprising combination of citizenship, creative inspiration, and thoughtful use of media.

In the past few years, increasing numbers of middle and high school students have been drawn to get involved with Malden Access Television (MATV) on their own. They have joined us as task volunteers, production crew and interns, and some have begun to spin off youth-produced videos and shows. Agencies and grant-funded projects that serve youth in the city also find MATV.

For a youth program whose agenda may include educating teens about smoking, violence, and other dangers—while guiding teens to develop cooperation and leadership skills—using a video project to tackle an issue serves multiple purposes. The middle school girls in a group at the Malden YMCA called "Common Ground" had written a brochure on dating violence. "They wanted to get the message out there more, and they came up with the idea of doing something for MATV," says assistant program director Holly Beth Plowman. Because Plowman is a college film and communications major with an MATV membership and production experience, she was able to lead the girls in scripting a 10-minute dramatic presentation about how to recognize and prevent dating violence.

"The girls felt that having their message on television was important, because the media so often portray women as sex objects," Plowman said. "Media images make men think they're more powerful than women, and that's one reason dating violence can begin, even when kids are as young as thirteen."

With research under their belts after writing the brochure, and some personal experiences with the issue, the Common Ground girls wrote a script and planned how they wanted the program to look. "They decided it would be best for each girl to speak her lines directly to the camera," said Plowman. "Dating violence is such a personal topic to talk about, we felt with someone talking about the information instead of acting it out as a drama, it would be easier for people to hear it."

The girls recognized the public relations capabilities of local media. "We wanted to do a television program because they thought, if viewers would see a group of young teenagers talking about this topic, they might say, 'Wow! Where'd they learn all that information?' and reach out to the YMCA," Plowman said.

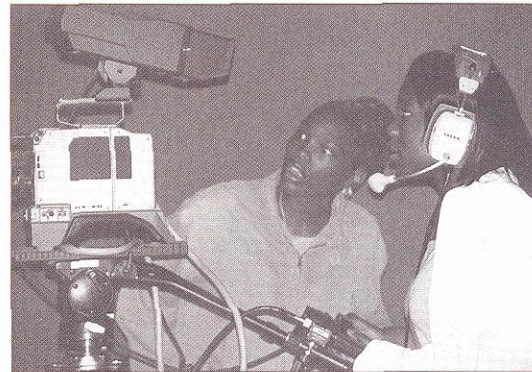
For a television studio crew, Plowman and Program Director Sarah Howard enlisted the help of several MATV teen and adult volunteers. The Common Ground girls focused on learning their lines, learning how to deliver their lines in a natural speaking voice, and figuring out the blocking and camera angles.

The television studio itself taught an additional lesson, as the

girls realized which aspects of their pre-production plan, such as variously colored spotlights, were too complex to create in the short time available. In the edit room, Plowman crafted the studio footage together with appropriate contemporary music and title and credit graphics to enhance the piece's message.

Were the girls pleased with the resulting video? "Yes, definitely, especially since they can actually see it on television, if they live in Malden," said Plowman. "I am from here, and Common Ground is at the Malden YMCA, so we did want to focus on this community. The message would be good to show in other towns, but we wanted to reach out to a small community first. The idea is, the fewer people are in a room, the more each one will feel your message."

Across the city at the Malden YWCA, another message-oriented video emerged from a group of older teens who receive stipends for tobacco pre-



YWCA girls in a television studio class at MATV.

vention outreach. Also an all-female group, the "Tobacco Girls" took a four-session class at MATV to learn studio production. While some learned camera, audio and lighting skills, others concentrated on the content for their 60-second PSA—two original, choreographed raps against smoking, set to instrumental hip hop music that the girls found. "Community media provides an outlet for creativity that girls this age, in this community, might not find so readily accessible elsewhere," said Bernadette Smith, coordinator of teen services at the Malden YWCA. "With this project, they have a chance to learn the skills that make them able to present information in a way they know will be accessible to other people their age." Like Plowman, Smith brings video production experience to her position, and she led the girls in editing the PSA.

When teens produce a video that brings a socially positive message to their own community, they certainly provide a service. And without question, the teens personally gain: new skills and knowledge, including a first-hand understanding of television is put together; a creative outlet; and, an opportunity to build collaborative skills, leadership skills and self-confidence. "There's a moment when the girls finally see themselves on TV, you can feel how pulling together on this project is a source of pride and a confidence-builder for each of them," said Smith. "A PSA airing on local television, everyone in the community can point to that and be proud of what the teenagers in this community can do."

*Susan Lawrence is a senior producer at Educational Access Malden Access Television (MATV), Malden, MA. To exchange ideas about how to inspire, train, fund and encourage teen prevention groups to make their own videos, please email [susan@matv.org](mailto:susan@matv.org)*



## Youth Program Evolves at CCTV in Cambridge, MA

BY GINNY BERKOWITZ

Youth programming at CCTV began eleven years ago with our first summer program for teens. The Summer Video Institute, which began as a camp, has evolved into a six-week paid work experience for twelve high school age youth each summer. Participants are trained and produce programs that are cablecast during the school year. The program became known as the Summer Media Institute last year because of the dramatic changes in technology and expanded production venues that now include not only channels but the internet and video streaming.

The Youth Media Empowerment Project was formally created in 1994 and included the summer program and a variety of in-school and after-school projects. In fall 1999, Cambridge Community Television, in partnership with the Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, received an Education Partnership Initiative grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The grant funds a three-year media literacy and production program that will become part of the middle school curriculum in Cambridge.

The Media Arts Education Program provides: media art and literacy classroom workshops for fifth and sixth grade students; training for five or six teachers and library media specialists in use of the media arts curriculum; after-school production program open to all seventh and eighth grade students; and an annual Media Fair showcasing student and faculty work.

The teens were employed by the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP). In addition to the support of the MSYEP, the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Cambridge Arts Council also supported this program.

A fine crew trained and guided this group through the media making process. SMI Coordinator Natasha Freidus, a former CCTV intern and recent graduate of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning Masters Program at MIT, worked with a team of media instructors including: Dan Owusu, Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School Graphic Design Teacher Linda Kim, MIT Public Service Center Summer Fellow at CCTV; and Shaun Clarke, CCTV's very own long time member, winner of the CCTV 2000 Youth Intern of the Year award, and trainee extraordinaire.

*Ginny Berkowitz is director of outreach and development at Cambridge Community Television. She can be reached at [ginny@cctvcambridge.org](mailto:ginny@cctvcambridge.org)*

## Summer Media Institute

### Media Doesn't Always Mean Television

BY NATASHA FREIDUS

Even at CCTV in Cambridge, Massachusetts, media doesn't always mean television.

From clay to camcorders, from pipe cleaners to Premiere, in this year's Summer Media Institute, participants not only gained expertise in the areas of digital technology, they caught a glimpse of their own power as storytellers.

This summer marked the eleventh year of the Summer Media Institute, a collaboration between Cambridge Community Television and the City of Cambridge Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program. For four hours a day, five days a week, a dozen of Cambridge's youth gathered together to explore the power and potential of media. Through a combination of observing, critiquing, and creating media, participants learned about the stages of video and website production ranging from storyboarding and planning to publicizing and planning a screening. Participant Loren Lewis Peters says, "...I learned how to edit, how to organize my story and to storyboard, and I learned how to work together with other people." The program culminated with a public screening in August, where each participant presented his or her work to a crowd of over fifty people. The final products included digital art, photography, videos and multimedia websites, with each participant choosing the medium they saw as fitting to their subject.

Not only did the forms of media that the participants chose range broadly, the content of their pieces were as diverse as the kids themselves. For the first project, the participants worked in groups, creating short videos about a specific aspect of Central Square, the urban hub of Cambridge.

Continuing with the theme of

community, the final project provided each participant with the opportunity to explore a particular part of their community that was meaningful to them. Some themes were personal interests, such as folk music and softball. Others focused more on social commentary or family history, including a critique of smoking, and explorations of Haitian, Puerto Rican, and Irish backgrounds. Linda Kim, public service intern from MIT commented, "I was amazed to witness a very personal, real part of each one of them come out in their digital stories. I also learned about how they think, talents and gifts they have, and how they feel about some of the things they see and live through."

Where will these new skills take the participants of the Summer Media Institute? Some, like Loren, have their next steps all planned. "I'm going to use my production skills to make my own music video when I become a celebrity." Yesenia Carrion intends to document the process of her becoming a lawyer, beginning at age fifteen. Others, like Athena Sasaki, explain that while they aren't sure, "I know I'm coming back." Regardless of where these beginning media-makers take their new skills, this summer proved that given the chance, some support, and a few laptops, the world of media presents a means for all to strut their stuff.

To view the work of the Summer Media Institute, or for more information, look at the SMI website at: <http://www.cctvcambridge.org/smi>

*Natasha Freidus is the Summer Media Institute coordinator at Cambridge [MA] Community Television. She can be reached at [tashafr@mit.edu](mailto:tashafr@mit.edu).*



# Youth Media Camp Scores at Conference

BY BILL NAY

I brought my family to our first Alliance conference in Atlanta eight years ago, hoping that there would be some activities for my little ones. Finding none planned, I had to resort to trading *Hometown Awards* and luncheon tickets for babysitting so I could attend workshops. The family also spent a lot of time at the pool. That was the last time I brought the children, until recently.

Tucson "broke the ice" in 2000, with the first ever Youth Media Camp offered as part of an Alliance conference. The camp was available to children aged nine and up. I enrolled my fifth grade daughter Dara in the inaugural Youth Media Camp. It was a great success!



Dara (age 10): "It was the first day of Youth Media Camp 2000. My Dad and I were already late and I really didn't want to go for some reason. Everyone knows that "first day of camp" feeling. "Dad, I don't want to go today," I said, "Please don't make me!"

• He made me.

We got into groups. The small group talked a little about the camera and how to use it, then the tripod and we split into smaller groups. I was in a group with an older boy named Daniel, an adult named Robert, and a girl named Virginia.

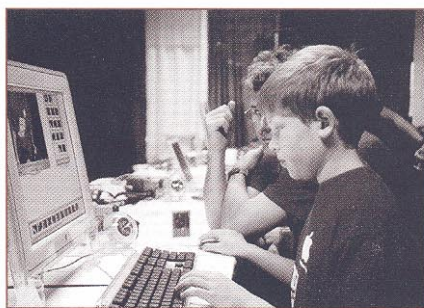
We thought about what we should do. We learned how to plot a movie with the little papers and everything, so we went to work. First, we came up with the idea, "Coffee Monster" and made the movie. After we shot the movie, we edited and then left for break. After break we watched it. The movie was very cool. We left for our hotel rooms and tomorrow's adventure.

The next day, I was late again and we were starting a new project. I had to go in a group with only boys, and that was okay...I guess. The group was pretty small. There was, Greg, Daniel, Zach and an older college type dude named Mike. At first we couldn't think of any thing, and then we got it. We were going to do a "mime" type "hide and seek." We started on the edge of the parking lot and worked our way around the hotel and Daniel (who was it) found people. If we did a scene wrong we did it again until we got it right.

After we got back from break we edited the movie and put in the graphics and music. That night it was the premiere and I was upset because it was my last time with the group. We watched the other group's video first, then ours, then the animation camps too. Our movie was so cool and so was the other group's too. I had so much fun at that camp and I hope to go back someday."

Dara enjoyed the Youth Media Camp in Tucson so much that I offered to help coordinate the Youth Media Camp for this year's Alliance conference in Washington, DC. The camp started like any other, with concerned parents dropping off anxious children and camp coordinators running around trying to make sure all the proper forms and releases were signed. However, unlike ordinary camp, this one would not be offering swimming, boating and arts and crafts. And there would most certainly not be gym!

Instead, gleaming iMACs were lined up along the tables and Canon Opturas, paired up with tripods, lay in neat rows on the floor. Early on, the camp coordinators Betty Francis, Donna Keating, Jackie Steven and I took a leap of faith and decided that this camp would be all digital from the start. Apple came



through with five computers that had iMovie editing software, and Fairfax Cable Access generously supplied the camera packages.

The instructors, Vilma Zefran (a high school media teacher)

and Phil Shapiro (who trains teachers in technology) had the right skills and the right experience to get the camp to gel quickly. They focused on giving basic camera skills and techniques and then getting "hands on" as quickly as possible. Seven Fairfax Access volunteers were also available to assist in any way. Their help proved to be invaluable.

There were eight students in the camp with ages ranging from nine to sixteen. Contrary to last year's camp, the girls outnumbered the boys. The campers were full of enthusiasm and energy, and quickly set about videotaping their first camera exercise.

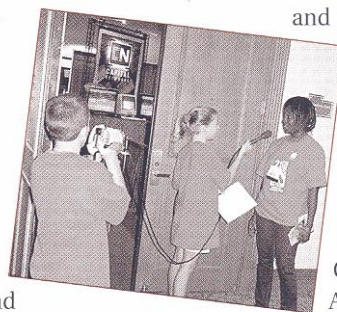
The great advantage in having iMovie editing software was the ease of use and the space saving advantage of having five edit stations on two six-foot folding tables. Also the Optura cameras were small and light which made it easy for the participants to move around shooting in the field. The campers were all editing by the middle of the first day! By the third

and final day of camp the kids had all shot and edited two finished videos of several minutes each.

For the second year in a row the Youth Camp "premiered" their work to thunderous applause at the Conference closing ceremony. And while the youths did not create what might be consid-

ered socially significant work, they went home a little more empowered, and a little more literate than when they arrived. I expect we may see them getting *Hometown Awards* in the near future.

Bill Nay has been involved in Access since 1993. He is currently manager of SPAC, a PEG Access facility in Shrewsbury, MA. He can be reached at [bnay@ci.shrewsbury.ma.us](mailto:bnay@ci.shrewsbury.ma.us)





# Youth Producer Media Festivals

Just a Few of the Many Offerings Available to Young Producers

While there's great self-satisfaction to be had in creating a media program, there can be even greater satisfaction when others recognize and herald your work as "a job well done". Here's some youth-oriented media festivals—the result of a quick Net search:

The **AUBURN INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS** is the result of five years of research in the Auburn area of Australia on the need for expression by people of non-English speaking backgrounds. In 2000, 130 films and videos from sixteen countries were showcased. <http://www.mt.net.au/~acdn/festival.html#film>

The **BACKYARD NATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL** is the result of a merger of the Indianapolis-based National Children's Film Festival and the Los Angeles-based Backyard Film Festival. Its mission is "to provide an opportunity for young people to create and appreciate stories through the lens of a camera." The BNCF actively encourages partnerships in an effort to establish a network of youth organizations, museums and science centers throughout the United States and Canada. Steven Spielberg, LEGO, HBO, and the Simon Youth Foundation are current partners. [http://www.backyardfilm.org/mainpages/2001\\_news.html](http://www.backyardfilm.org/mainpages/2001_news.html)

The **CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL** bills itself as the largest children's film festival in North America. In 2000, it hosted 210 films from forty-one countries by children aged three to thirteen [http://www.cicff.org/kidsfest\\_2001/entry.htm](http://www.cicff.org/kidsfest_2001/entry.htm)

The International Documentary Association sponsors the **DAVID L.**

**WOLPER STUDENT DOCUMENTARY AWARDS.** A \$1000 cash prize is presented annually to recognize achievement in documentary film and video production at the college and university level. <http://www.documentary.org/>

The **DO IT YOUR DAMN SELF (DIYDS!!) FESTIVAL** was created in 1996 by youth in Cambridge, Massachusetts. According to their website their philosophy is: if you want something done, "you gotta do it your damn self." <http://www.doityourdamnself.org>

Our own Alliance for Community Media's **HOMETOWN VIDEO FESTIVAL** offers recognition for excellence opportunities to "Youth" and "Student" producers. <http://www.alliancecm.org/>

The **INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL** aims "to foster knowledge and understanding of wildlife and their habitat through educational films and other media". There is a student category. <http://www.wildlife-films.org/>

The **MAINE STUDENT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL** is an offshoot of the Maine International Film Festival. It is sponsored by the Maine Alliance of Media Arts and is open to Maine residents nineteen years of

age and younger.

<http://www.agate.net/%7Eile/mama>

**NEXTFRAME** calls itself "the world's largest student film and video festival." The Festival is held at Temple University in Philadelphia. <http://www.temple.edu/nextframe/>

The **OPEN VIDEO FESTIVAL** is organized by cable access youth producers in Tel Aviv, Israel. The Festival encourages entries by youth that use low-cost technologies to produce media. <http://users.actcom.co.il/~telenoar/>

The **PALISADES FILM FESTIVAL** is spon-

sored by the Junior Achievement of the Hudson Valley and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Rockland County (NY). There are two competition categories: high school students and college students and filmmakers to the age of twenty-eight. <http://www.palisadesfilmfest.org/>

The **SCHOLASTIC ARTS AND WRITING AWARDS** is for students in grades seven through twelve. There are sixteen visual art categories and nine writing categories. <http://www.scholastic.com/artandwriting/>

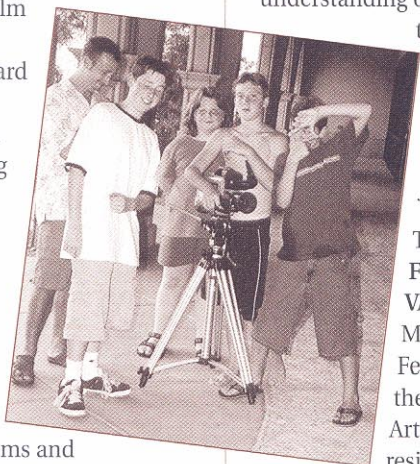
Videonics sponsors the **THOUGHTS AND DREAMS SCHOOL VIDEO CONTEST**. The goal of the contest is to encourage educators and students to use video as a creative educational tool for developing communication skills. <http://www.videonics.com/t-and-d/>

The **URBAN VISIONARIES: CRITICAL EXPRESSIONS BY YOUTH** looks for works "that explore today's social issues and popular culture from a teen perspective by New York City youth producers." <http://www.dctvny.org/>

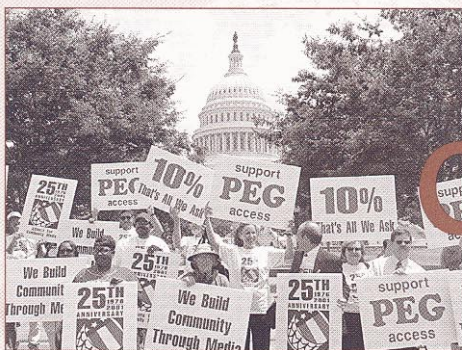
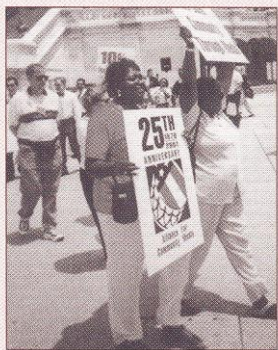
The **WORLD POPULATION INTERNATIONAL FILM/VIDEO COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS** is an international competition for college and secondary students "to encourage critical thought and self-expression regarding population growth, resource consumption, the environment, and our common global future." <http://www.wpfvf.com/>

The **YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL** is produced by the Northwest Film Center's statewide Filmmakers-in-the Schools Outreach Program and "celebrates artistic excellence, technical achievement and originality in live action, documentary and animated films and videos made by kids, schools and youth organizations in OR, WA, ID, MT, AK and UT." <http://www.nwfilm.org/index.html>

Information on other festivals, and updates on several the festivals listed here are available at <http://www.pbs.org/merrow/trt/links/domestic.htm>.







# The Alliance Celebrates 25

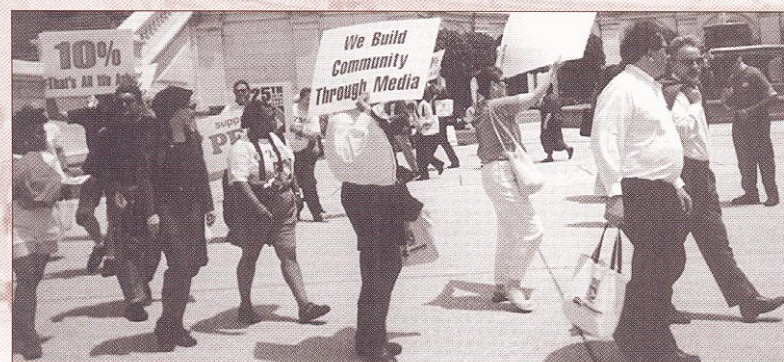
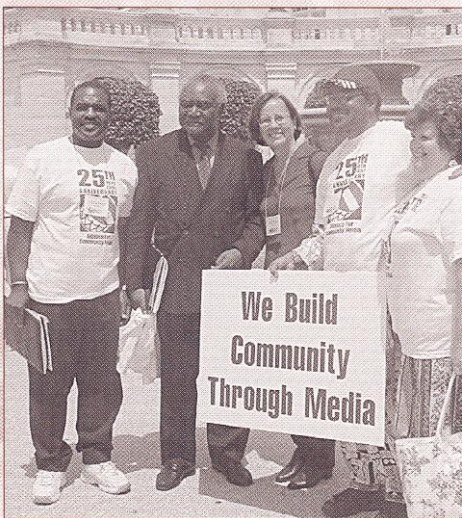
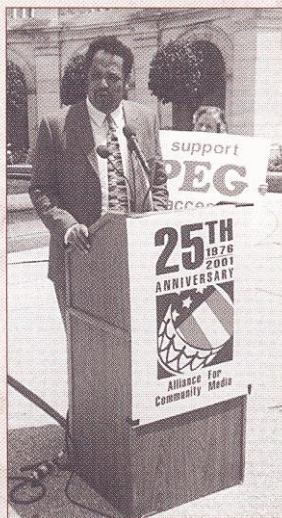
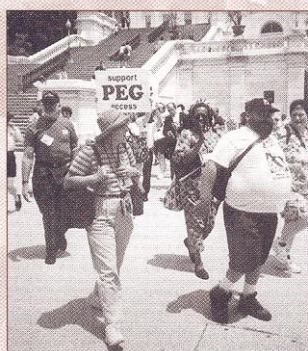
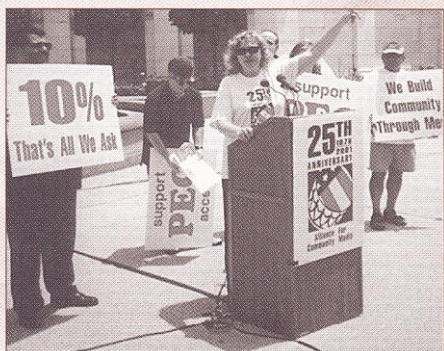
The national conference in Washington, DC this past July was a great success as the Alliance celebrated its 25th Anniversary. More than six hundred attended some fifty workshops and seminars.

Highlights of the conference included the rally on the steps of Capitol Hill for PEG access and bandwidth. There was an International Reception at the Organization of American States. Clovis Baptista, executive secretary for Inter-American Telecommunication Commission, invited the Alliance to attend their conference in Washington, DC this November and work together to further the world-wide media democracy movement. We had one of the largest trade shows with forty-two vendors, and we held forty-seven workshops in seven different tracks.

Keynote speaker Gloria Tristani, outgoing FCC board person, spoke in glowing terms of her belief that "PEG access is the purest form of media democracy." Her full comments follow in this issue of *CMR* and are available on the Alliance website.

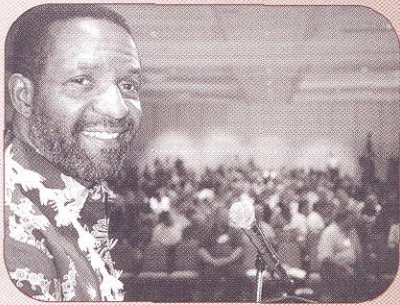
The Alliance Awards Luncheon recognized the following for their efforts to further community media. The City of Brunswick and Brunswick Township, Ohio received the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication. John Donovan of Cambridge, Massachusetts was awarded the Buske Leadership Award, and Azaka Ajanaku of Chicago received the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity.

Plans are already underway for next year's conference in Houston, July 10-13, 2002. The theme will be "Celebrate Diversity."



More conference pictures throughout this section.  
Photographers: Jeff Hansell, Wita Duran & Tim Goodwin.





## Hometown Awards Bigger Than Ever

On Thursday, July 12, the Alliance held its 24th Annual Hometown Video Festival Awards at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, DC during the 25th Anniversary Conference.

Over 600 people attended the awards reception that was emceed by Kojo Nnamdi (above), host of the nationally syndicated radio talk show, *Public Interest*, and co-hosted by Bunnie Riedel.

The 24th Annual Hometown Video Festival received 1681 entries from 1038 producers in 313 cities in 44 states and provinces. More than 400 access professionals, community producers and subject specialists volunteered their time to serve as judges at 58 locations across the country. Awards were given to 140 different producers and multiple awards were given in about one third of the divisions.

Rod Swartz of Princeton Educational Television produced the awards gala while Chip Berquist of Waycross Community Media Center produced the *Hometown* winner tape. Support was given to the awards night by Arlington Community Television and Citicable (Frank Clark) of Cincinnati.

In honor of the 25th Anniversary, the special "25 Years of Access" was created to recognize the twenty-five year span of access production. There were 108 entries in this category with 23 finalists that were judged to find the "top ten." Awardees were not told they had won until the evening of the awards.

As the nation's largest and oldest video festival, the *Hometown Awards* brings pride and prestige to those who win and it provides a standard for excellence in access programming.

# Award Winners Honored at National Conference

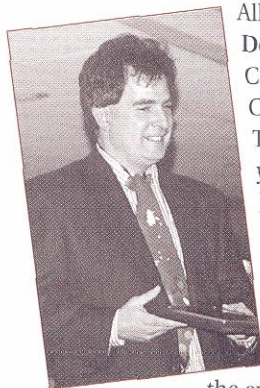
Once again, the Alliance honored some outstanding contributors to community media at the national conference. The George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications is given annually to an organization or individual

that has made an outstanding contribution to championing the growth and experience of humanistic community communications. This year's recipient, the City of Brunswick and Brunswick Township, Ohio, has demonstrated



those characteristics through years of service to their community. Accepting the award on behalf of the City of Brunswick and Brunswick Township for their valiant efforts on behalf of access were Cable Coordinator Jeff Neidert (above) and City Councilman Tom Miller.

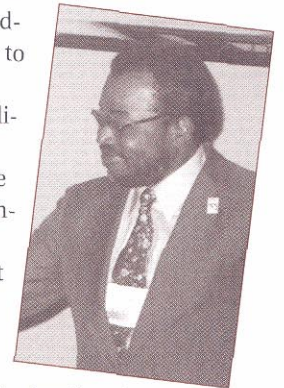
The Buske Leadership Award honors individuals who have demonstrated commitment to the mission and goals of the Alliance, leadership within the organization for the last three years, a high degree of involvement in the organization nationally, regionally and at the chapter level, and continuing service to the



Alliance. **John Donovan** of Cambridge Community Television was this year's recipient. John is a fifteen year veteran of community media: first in Medford, Massachusetts as the executive director of Falmouth Community Television and now in Cambridge, Massachusetts. John served as Northeast Region chair and redesigned and edited the Northeast Courier, but he is best known for his leadership on the Alliance national board where as treasurer he moved us from near

financial ruin to the fiscal stability that the Alliance now enjoys. Persistence, dedication, quiescence, and utmost intelligence define John as a true leader and friend of community media.

The Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity is given annually to those persons who show an outstanding contribution to a process that encourages, facilitates, or creates culturally diverse and/or non mainstream community involvement in the field of community media. This



year's recipient, **Azaka Ajanaku**, is a producer of the program *Unity in Diversity: C'est la Vie* on Chicago Access Network Television (CAN-TV).

Ajanaku was recognized for his years of organizing in the Chicago Haitian community and for promoting Haitian participation with CAN TV. Ajanaku's goal with his program is to promote cultural sensitivity, racial understanding, and community empowerment. He has enlisted other Haitians to produce programs that represent the perspectives of women, youth, churches and musicians. "It used to be, when Haiti was covered in the mainstream network news, even if it was just for a second, Haitians here would call and tell each other to watch," Ajanaku says. "Not any more. We don't need somebody else to tell us what is happening in our country and our community." When viewers ask Ajanaku how they can show their support for his program, he directs them to become CAN-TV members. "I prefer to direct my viewers to support CAN-TV in the spirit of 'collectivity' that defines public access," Ajanaku says.

Who else in the community media family deserves this kind of recognition? Many people and organizations make outstanding contributions to the field. Make sure these people are honored by nominating them for these awards for next year.



# Public, Educational, and Governmental Access Channels: *Localism & Diversity In Action*

Keynote Address to the Alliance for Community Media • July 13, 2001

FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani

*[As prepared for delivery]*

Good afternoon, and thank you for that kind introduction Bunnie. I am delighted to join you here. First of all, I would like to congratulate the Alliance for Community Media on your 25th anniversary. You have not only survived but thrived in the past quarter century. Having been in Washington just since 1997, I am beginning to see what a true achievement that is!

Actually, one of the keys to the Alliance's longevity has to do with the clarity of your vision. Being clearly focused on your mission helps you avoid distraction or unnecessary conflict. And being clearly focused on your objective gives you credibility with Washington policymakers. That is a valuable commodity in this city. That is why I have always been very interested in the Alliance's work. And when Bunnie asked me to join you on your 25th anniversary, I was happy to accept.

Today I would like to discuss your corner of the video universe. The work done by public, educational, and governmental access providers has always been valuable. At its most basic, PEG access empowers individuals and groups to use the media to educate and enrich their communities. It is television by the people and for the people. It represents the purest form of media democracy. Now, with the growing consolidation of the media, the role of PEG access is more important than ever.

## **Industry consolidation and new technology—a “crisis” of sorts.**

President Kennedy was fond of observing that the Chinese symbol for the word “crisis” actually consists of two distinct symbols—one represents “danger,” the other “opportunity.” I think that is helpful insight for where PEG access groups find themselves today.

On the one hand, cable industry consolidation is increasing the leverage of the largest cable operators in the franchising process. In the past, franchising authori-



**“At a time where local regulators may fear the growing concentration of cable industry power, PEG access providers must remind everyone of their inherent localism. As local control of cable systems becomes a distant memory, PEG access providers must capitalize on the concerns raised by consolidation.”**

ties have benefited from seeing the kinds of deals other cable operators strike with their franchising authorities. But as the number of cable operators dwindles, the remaining MSOs may be able to move toward standardized franchise agreements. The result is that franchising authorities have fewer negotiated agreements from which to glean insights. That could make it harder for franchising authorities to secure the best deals for PEG access.

But hopefully PEG access entities, working with the local franchising authorities, will turn this consolidation into an opportunity to grow PEG access. At a time where local regulators may fear the growing concentration of cable industry power, PEG access providers must remind everyone of their inherent localism. As local control of cable systems becomes a distant memory, PEG access providers must capitalize on the concerns raised by consolidation. Ask your fran-

chising authorities to put a stake in the ground. Encourage them to do what they can to counter the trend toward bigness and sameness by supporting greater resources for PEG access channels.

And just when consolidation may weaken the hand of franchising authorities, the importance of getting good agreements has never been greater. This is because of rapid advances in cable technology. A prime example is interactive television. It has the potential to provide exciting new services and features for millions of cable subscribers. It could make television more enjoyable, informative, and educational.

But it also could help tilt the playing field against PEG access channels. Channels overlaid with interactive capability could gain an artificial advantage for viewership over “plain old” video channels. Another issue with interactive television is the importance of PEG channels receiving accurate listings in the cable operator's electronic program guide. As channel capacity expands drastically, EPGs become more essential in helping viewers find the shows they want to watch. Not being listed in the EPG could have dire effects on PEG viewership. Cable operators must make every effort to bring interactive functionality to PEG channels as well as commercial channels.

Nonetheless, I do not mean to oversimplify this task. No one really knows which applications will drive demand for interactive television. And bringing interactive TV functionality to PEG channels will require hard work on the part of PEG programmers. But franchise renewals are rare events, and it will be important for franchising authorities to secure cooperation on interactive TV from cable operators even if “interactive television” remains an evolving concept.

A second area where new cable technology heralds both promise and pitfalls is digital cable channels. The ability to transmit video in digital format is an



exciting technical advance. It allows cable operators to increase the number of channels they provide to customers. Whereas analog cable systems use a six megahertz path to transmit just a single video channel, digital cable uses that same bandwidth to transmit up to twelve video channels. Digital cable represents a sea of change in the transmission capacity of cable networks.

As with interactive television, digital cable could marginalize PEG channels. Sitting among thirty or forty cable channels, three or four PEG channels are a reasonable component of cable service and can be found by people looking for them as well as by channel surfers. Sitting among hundreds of channels, three or four PEG channels could easily get lost in the shuffle.

To help avoid this, cable operators should use this increased digital capacity to renew their commitment to their communities. The Vermont Public Utility Commission has taken a significant step in this area by requiring its cable operators to set aside ten percent of their broadband capacity for PEG access services. I am not an expert in cable franchising, but that decision strikes me as good public policy. It helps ensure that PEG access programmers benefit from significant advances in cable technology while leaving the lion's share of channels under the cable operator's control. I hope that, at a minimum, digital cable technology will encourage cable operators to allocate more channels to PEG access.

#### **PEG access channels—an antidote to media concentration.**

In the past few years, the radio, television, telephone, and cable industries have undergone serious consolidation. I am doing my best at the FCC to ensure a diversity of voices and delivery systems. In the area of radio, for example, the 1996 Telecommunications Act eliminated limits on national radio station ownership. One group owner, Clear Channel, has gone from owning 62 stations when the Act passed to owning roughly 1200 stations today. That concerns me.

To help counter the effects of radio consolidation, the FCC—under the leadership of former Chairman Bill Kennard—created a new service called low power FM radio. We believed that increased public access to the airwaves could be achieved without harmful interference



**“...the more consolidation that occurs, the greater the value of PEG access programming. PEG access is an antidote to the dangers of cable industry consolidation. It is a powerful idea that part of the media should exist directly in the hands of the public rather than large corporations. The ground-up programming you get when you empower individuals to create their own shows can be a welcome contrast to the top-down, lowest common denominator of network programming.”**

and would allow smaller non-profit groups to speak to their communities over the airwaves. Congress regrettably modified our initial plan, but I am pleased to report that over eighteen hundred non-profits have applied for licenses.

I know that there are people in the audience who are low power FM applicants, and I applaud your patience! I am hopeful that low power FM licensees will produce the kind of diverse, community-oriented programming that PEG access producers have been giving us for years.

In the same way that low power FM radio may help counter the trend toward syndicated programming, I hope PEG access providers will be beacons of diversity and localism in the increasingly consolidated cable industry. After the AT&T-Media One deal, the cable industry seemed to take a breath. But earlier this week, the spark may have been lit for another round of consolidation when Comcast, the number three cable company, offered to buy AT&T Broadband, the largest cable company.

As cable operators get bigger, control over programming will be held by fewer and fewer gatekeepers. This enormous power concerns me. It's one thing to say there are a diversity of voices out there, and the Internet will ensure that no one exerts undue control over America's information conduits. But look where the vast majority of Americans spend the most of their free time—in front of the television.

For better or worse, the content of television has far more influence on what Americans know, what they think, and how they govern themselves than whatever is on the Internet or in the newspapers. Television is a uniquely powerful and influential medium, and government regulators should think long and hard before approving another round of cable consolidation.

But the more consolidation that occurs, the greater the value of PEG access programming. PEG access is an antidote to the dangers of cable industry consolidation. It is a powerful idea that part of the media should exist directly in the hands of the public rather than large corporations. The ground-up programming you get when you empower individuals to create their own shows can be a welcome contrast to the top-down, lowest common denominator of network programming.

In its dealings with the nation's radio and television stations, the FCC has long promoted the goals of diversity and localism. These are fundamental objectives that broadcasters should aspire to. But while I keep hoping this diversity will magically appear on television networks each fall, PEG access programming represents true diversity today. Just look what happens when you put cameras in the hands of average Americans—they make shows that look like America. One of the true strengths of public access programming is the opportunity for different groups to produce and show programming about their own cultures.

I also applaud the educational and governmental uses of PEG channels. I have long supported the use of technology to improve education. The FCC's primary focus in this area has been the e-rate. That is the plan Congress created to help schools and libraries pay for Internet connections. The e-rate plan caused some consumers' phone bills to rise by a few cents, and that generated political



pressure on the FCC to scale back the program. The FCC rejected those calls, and the e-rate has proven to be a key contributor to getting all of America's classrooms connected to the Internet.

In the same vein, there is little doubt that educational opportunities can be enhanced through educational access channels. One-way distance learning has improved the lives of many students. I am optimistic that two-way distance learning will put a new face on education.

And government access channels are, without question, an important exercise of self-governance. C-SPAN is a great contribution that the cable industry has made to Americans. It allows Americans to watch their elected leaders do the nation's business. Whether we like what we see is another matter...but the point is we can see what is going on. We can then make our views known. We can be better-informed voters.

The same should be true for local government. Allowing citizens to see their local governments in action is a vital democratic tool. I can think of no more valuable use of the communications media than to strengthen our democracy. Government access channels do that in a profound way. They allow citizens to see parts of their government they had previously only read about, if that. Democracies work best when citizens have more information, not less.

And local government is an area where interactive television could add some real value. How about allowing citizens to testify about matters of city business via a two-way interactive cable network? Reduce the barriers to participation, and you will get more citizen involvement in their local governments than you ever imagined. That is one of the great promises of interactive PEG channels.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not again mention the work done by the Alliance for Community Media. The Alliance serves an important role by acting as a clearinghouse for PEG access best practices. There are more than fifteen hundred access centers nationwide. Each one is a laboratory for how the cable medium can be used to further personal expression, community-building, and participation in government. But for PEG access to continue to evolve and improve, the best ideas need to bubble up to the surface. The Alliance facilitates this by sharing new and creative ideas at workshops like the ones at this convention.

Thank you again for the chance to speak with you, and congratulations on twenty-five years of service. PEG access has a great history. Do take advantage of the ongoing industry and technological changes to make an even brighter future for PEG and its participants.

*Gloria Tristani most recently spent four years as an FCC commissioner, where she was chair of the FCC's V-Chip Task Force. She was appointed by President Clinton in 1997, after serving as chair of the New Mexico State Corporation Commission in 1996. She was named as one of the nation's 100 most influential Hispanics by Hispanic Business Magazine in 1996 and 1998. She has returned to her home state of New Mexico, where she is active in state politics.*

# The Community of Community Media

BY PATTI DALLAS

When I first began working as the coordinator of our PEG station in Yellow Springs, Ohio, I had no idea that I was joining a movement—or even an extended community. I was simply interested in the possibilities of local television in my hometown.

It was at my first regional conference in Lansing, Michigan that I began to get a sense of the movement of community media. It was wonderful to be with so many people who were also involved in the practical concerns of public access, as well as the political aspects. I especially remember Bunnie Riedel's passionate presentation at that conference.

Not only was I introduced to the wide range and size of the public access movement, but I also became aware that it was in itself a community. Clearly most everyone knew each other and were happy to be together again. It almost felt like a family reunion.

Thanks to a scholarship from the Grass Roots Committee, I was able to attend the 25th annual conference in Washington, DC. By this time I had also attended the regional conference in Dayton, so I was beginning to feel at home in the Alliance crowd.

This was a wonderfully well-organized conference with so much to learn and so much to do, the hardest part was choosing. My interest was small public access (Yellow Springs' population is four thousand) and educational access. My first session, "Access 101: Small Access Centers," gave me a good sense of what the role is of a board of directors, ideas of how to generate funds and encourage volunteers.

Since our high school has a very active video department, I was interested in any workshops that might help me create a stronger link to our schools. In the workshop, "Creative Partnerships for Education, Television and The Community," I got a lot of ideas and connected with several people involved in educational access. I'm still following up on leads from that session.

We were given so many workshops to choose from, it was difficult to narrow it down to one per period. I regret not having more time for the trade show.

The extra-curricular activities were great. I enjoyed the "Oscars" atmosphere at the *Hometown Video Festival* and seeing the kind of work that other people are putting out. The "Spirit of Washington" cruise was a lot of fun—eating, dancing and enjoying the beautiful view from the Potomac.

In the closing ceremony I could appreciate a combination of simple reverence and respect for tribal ancestors, as well as acknowledgment of the sacredness of our effort to create community through the medium of television.

I am very grateful to the Grass Roots Committee for giving me the opportunity to take part in the national conference this year. It has helped to strengthen my knowledge of and commitment to community media—and thus strengthen my community.

*Patti Dallas works parttime as the coordinator of Channel 13 in Yellow Springs, Ohio. She has also produced several musical cassettes and a video for young children ([www.goldenglowmusic.com](http://www.goldenglowmusic.com)).*



## 'Exploring the Audiences for PEG Access' next in CMR

*Community Media Review is looking for contributors for our next issue, the theme of which is "Exploring the Audiences for PEG Access." Possible topics include audience surveys, media usage among different audiences, reading strategies and media literacy, the notion of the "local" as a way to think about serving audiences, and how to turn knowledge of the audience into scheduling and promotional strategies. If you would like to participate or know of someone who might, please contact Bill Kirkpatrick (608.238.6656, [mwkirkpa@students.wisc.edu](mailto:mwkirkpa@students.wisc.edu)) or Pat Garlinghouse (713.524.7700 ext. 13, [patg@houston-media-source.org](mailto:patg@houston-media-source.org)). Thank you!*

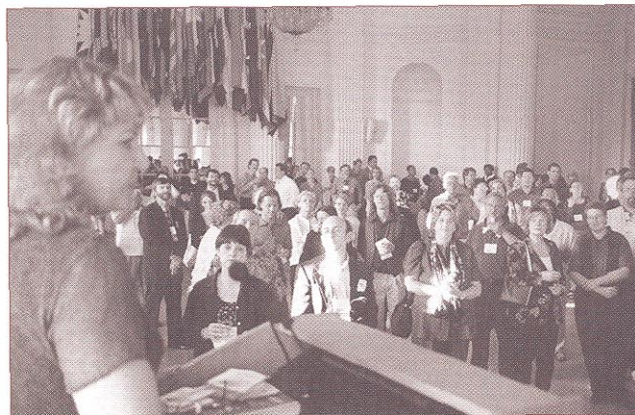
# OAS Hosts Alliance International Reception in Washington, DC

This year, the headquarters of the Organization of American States served as a stately backdrop for the international reception of the Alliance conference, which was co-sponsored by the First Amendment Center and organized by Alliance Executive Director Bunnie Riedel. The event featured remarks by Gene Policinski, deputy director of the First Amendment Center and Clovis Baptista, executive secretary of the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (see speech excerpt following in this article), a part of the OAS.

Ms. Riedel used the occasion to highlight the importance of media democracy throughout the world and welcomed a number of guests including Jean Christophe Lingoua, the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Congo (not to be confused with the Democratic Republic of Congo which it shares a border) and representatives of the Bulgarian Media Coalition (BMC), there on a tour sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Members of the BMC spoke of their goal to develop independent Bulgarian media, for a pluralistic and free media environment, and were eager to learn more about the Alliance.

The chair of the coalition, Yassen Boyadzhiev, said that he would like to widen contacts with Alliance members in order to



gather ideas for creating strong forums for free speech within his country. "Bulgaria does not have a long history of independent medias and a free press," Boyadzhiev stated. BMC member groups were only founded within the last ten years. However, because the BMC represents the interests of the cable operators and broadcasters, as well as free speech and human rights advocates, this reporter thinks that the Bulgarian Media Coalition has a decent chance to succeed in their mission.

After the official remarks concluded, the audience was serenaded by the musical group *Boliviana Ware* as the early evening sun filtered in the grand windows of the reception hall.

## Baptista Calls for Collaboration

During his speech, Secretary Baptista made an important linkage between the mission and activities of the Alliance for Community Media and the work of CITEL as it seeks to develop telecommunications infrastructure and universal service throughout the western hemisphere. Mr. Baptista indicated that the Alliance might seize the opportunity to help champion consumer causes and the public interest as CITEL prepares for its next General Assembly to be held in Buenos Aires next year. An excerpt of Baptist's remarks follow:

"...earlier this year the Heads of State at the Third Summit of the Americas said, with respect to telecommunications: 'stress the importance of adopting policies to protect the interests of users and enhance the quality, efficiency, coverage and diversity of services; 'bear in mind the social, political,



**Bunnie Riedel [center] with Jean Christophe Lingoua (left), First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Congo, and Clovis Baptista, executive secretary of the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission.**



economic, commercial and cultural needs of our populations, in particular those of less developed communities; "They also decided to, 'Recommend that...CITEL develop a clear definition of the responsibilities of governments and private entities...'

"You are probably asking yourselves what all this means?

"Well, there is no single answer to that question, but you certainly can look at it as an opportunity for you to spread the word about the benefits to be gained from having available in each country of the Americas dedicated channels for use by government, educators, and the public as a routine part of the electronic media.

"People throughout the Americas need to understand how such a system can and does work.

"The activities undertaken by your association can rightly be thought of as being within the scope of activities identified as important by the Heads of State at the Summit of the Americas in April.

"I can certainly see a match between the activities of your organization and the responsibilities entrusted to CITEL. For this reason, I would like to extend an invitation to your association to participate in the next meeting of the Permanent Consultative Committee II whose mandate covers the type of activities in which you are engaged.

"I believe that both sides will benefit from this encounter."

*Editor's note: Bunnie Riedel and the author will be attending this meeting in November in Washington, DC.*

#### LINKS:

[www.oas.org](http://www.oas.org)

[bmc.bulmedia.com](http://bmc.bulmedia.com)

[bulmedia.com](http://bulmedia.com)

[www.freedomforum.org](http://www.freedomforum.org)

— prepared by Jeff Hansell, International Chair of the Alliance



**Bunnie Riedel meets with members of the Bulgarian Media Coalition.**



**Conference delegates gather in the hall of the Organization of American States in Washington.**

## *First Amendment Center's Gene Policinski Cites Need for Renewed Commitment*

*Excerpt of remarks by Gene Policinski of the First Amendment Center given July 11, 2001, at the International Reception, Alliance for Community Media International Conference and Trade Show, Washington, D.C.*

"Just a few days ago, we celebrated the 225th anniversary of the founding of this nation. At the same time, in our latest annual 'State of the First Amendment' survey, we faced results that called not for celebration, but for a renewed commitment and effort to advocacy for the principles for which our nation came into existence.

"Nearly four in ten Americans—thirty-nine percent—say that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights that it guarantees.

"As worrisome as that figure is, perhaps even more troubling is that last year only twenty-two percent of Americans expressed that same belief.

"A measure of the task ahead for advocates of the First Amendment is that very few Americans—as low as one percent—can name all five freedoms in the First Amendment ... the freedoms of speech, religion, the press, to petition the government and to assemble in groups to seek change.

In a sense, we have the worst of things ... thirty-nine percent of Americans seem willing to put limits on rights that they

aren't even familiar with...

"Forty-six percent of the public thinks the press has too much freedom—a scary figure, moderated only slightly by the fact that in some previous years that total has been as high as fifty-three percent.

"The Founders would blush...or worse...They felt so strongly about an unfettered press that they put no modifiers on the reference to a free press, though the newspapers of their time were far more excessive in their criticism, attacks and advocacy than any we have today.

"There seems little question to us that the public's perceptions about the First Amendment are influenced by how they view this most visible practitioner of its freedoms: The news media.

"...there are too few of us...and the task is a great one...one that will prevail only if we work together...and together educate Americans and remind them of what can and will be lost if we chip away—or add exceptions—to those precious forty-five words of the First Amendment.

"We can all ... we must all ... take up the torch that the Founders lit more than two centuries ago ... You are in a unique position and uniquely qualified to do so. I hope that we can continue to work together on this noble cause."

—edited by Jeff Hansell



# We get around!

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# Workshops Make the Conference

## Attendees Ask for More and Offer a Few Suggestions of Their Own

BY PAT GARLINGHOUSE

Attendees responded in large numbers to workshop and overall conference evaluations with helpful suggestions for future workshops while presenting future planners with some interesting challenges.

According to the Grand Planner Dave Vogel, "bags of evaluation forms ended up in my office and it looks like that even when we're bad, we're good!" With an average of thirty attendees per class, any hints of not-so-desirable comments were minimized and every evaluation form provided praise and constructive suggestions. The majority of comments centered around the type of workshops that were most



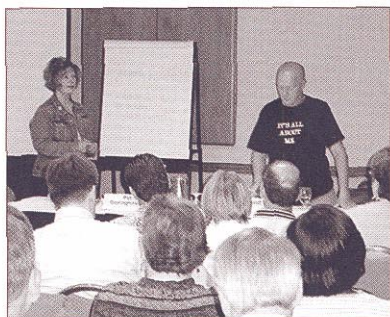
popular, very specific ideas about workshop formats, speakers, and presentation style, and general

prize for state of the art technology and how access is doing it! Access management folks enjoyed the presentation style of the experienced dynamic presenters. Common suggestions were to have more group discussion and interaction, more question and answer sessions, more time for speakers, and more tables for workshop materials and handouts. People requested expert speakers and ample time for sharing ideas, because it is so

helpful to hear how others grapple with problems. Future requests were for in-depth discussions of policies and procedures, commercialism, programming and production policies, and specific information about how to avoid law suits. The choice of moving toward production type courses precipitated a great deal of feedback.

Attendees would like to see longer workshops (possibly three in one day for the popular ones), more choices for workshops even if they overlap, repeated workshops, more information about technology and new products, especially for smaller items, more vendor presentations, more resources and contacts, and more information about key issues such as production and how to promote your facility and motivate staff.

The boat tour and the trip to the Hill topped the list for attendees in terms of enjoyment. Attendees did have a sense of needing to take a breath and requested that events not be scheduled so close together on the first day, and that a two-hour break be provided before the night activi-



ties. It was also suggested that planners facilitate interaction among attendees, provide a list of attendees at beginning of conference, facilitate communication between the Alliance Board and members, perhaps through a joint session, and provide more introductions at main sessions. People were pleased with the vendor raffle as they got a

chance to talk and spend more time with the vendors. Many requests came in for networking opportunities with others interested in specific topics, and that dining out lists be provided with a great variety



of restaurants by food, cost, atmosphere, and of high importance, good elevators in the hotel.

The challenge for future conference planning? Adding workshops. An interesting suggestion was

to have the conference in two parts: Wednesday/Thursday for management and Friday/Saturday for production, with the *Hometown* awards on Friday. Now is the time to don your creative hats and make suggestions for upcoming conferences. By anyone's standards, the workshops were a big hit at the 25th! The popularity of PEG is on the rise, interest in access is increasing and by building upon the 2001 evaluation suggestions the Alliance will generate additional interest, participation and success!

Pat Garlinghouse is executive director of Houston MediaSource. She can be reached at [patg@houston-mediasource.org](mailto:patg@houston-mediasource.org)

comments about what makes a conference successful overall.

A summary of the comments follows—the trend is obvious. The workshop "Award Winning Production Tips" with Alan McKenzie from *Good Morning Texas* WFAA (Fox Affiliate) won the grand prize. It was suggested that this be scheduled as an all-day session next year. The Big Kids want to move in on the Little Kids Camp with one of their own, similar to an all conference documentary workshop. The capital planning session was hugely popular and the basic streaming workshop took the



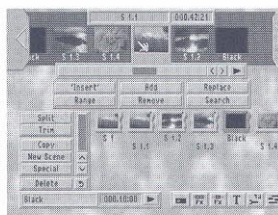
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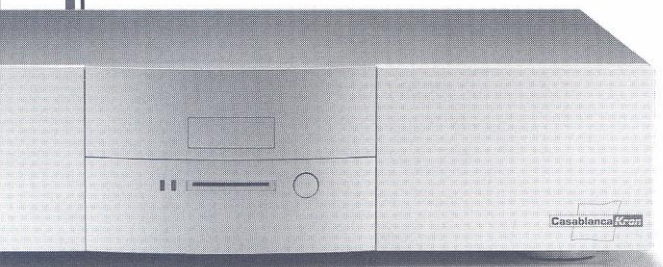


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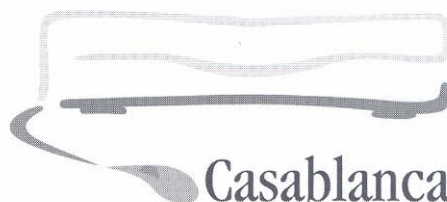


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# Energetic Discussion Highlights White Paper Session

## 'Re-thinking Access: Cultural Barriers to Public Access Television'

BY JOHN HIGGINS

Ideas were flowing like wine (and tasting just as sweet) during the Alliance 2001 conference White Paper session, "Revitalizing Access Philosophy." Approximately 50 people participated in the discussion following the presentation, "Re-thinking Access: Cultural Barriers to Public Access Television," by Bill Kirkpatrick of Madison, Wisconsin.

Kirkpatrick's presentation was chosen by competitive submission of essays during the spring of 2001; authors were asked to address a philosophical or self reflexive aspect of access as we look to the future. Kirkpatrick's essay looked at cultural barriers to access, and critically explored some widely held notions of access. The paper is available on the CMR website at [www.communitymediareview.org](http://www.communitymediareview.org).

The spirited discussion following the presentation primarily included people who have been involved with public access for years in a variety of capacities. Here is a tasting of the ideas flowing during the discussion:

**Greg:** I want people to value public access, but I don't necessarily want people to watch it. You don't have to watch this stuff—if it fits some minority group in community, that's okay.

I'm intrigued by Bill's notion that viewers need to do work to understand what producers might be saying.

**Pat:** I'm interested in the formulation that form is a way to dismiss political content. There are several bridges that help people accept "inane" programming. Seemingly inane stuff is important to access practice for legal arguments, the Supreme Court case after the Cable Act was based on this idea. One of the bridges to accepting "inane" programming is that it is a "bridge of practice."

People accepting the notion of the "public sphere" usually are drawing from early [German philosopher] Habermas's writings in the 1960s, translated in the 1980s. This is very different from Habermas's later writings on the topic. So early Habermas also becomes a bridge to acceptance for this programming.

We need to separate from the notion of the "public sphere" the notion of the "marketplace of ideas." This is not the same as the public sphere.

**Elliott 1:** This reminds me of the scarcity of spectrum argument. We are acting as though there is still spectrum scarcity, and there is, in some ways.

How about another access: access to people at home watching TV?

**Elliott 2:** There are other sorts of values that are important to me that don't always follow the First Amendment, including that I want to reach kids and people who can't tell a story well.

What will happen to access if we don't address these issues that Bill raised and that are being raised in this discussion? These issues matter!

**Joel:** Bill is inspiring me to think of the "fun factor": a desire to see other crazy stuff, even on the zoological level. It's the anarchy factor. Access and technology is a toy...and from toys come things of value.

**John:** I don't agree that access staff are trying to influence what producers do. It is important that we try to get people to think and value thought.

I see the rap group *Public Enemy* as making a political statement, but I don't

see the Madison teens Bill described, with wrestling, as making a political statement.

**Bill:** I disagree. *Metromen* (the teen wrestling show described in the essay) is political, but not in the traditional sense within access.

**Noreen:** I want to hear more that we're really looking at pictures. It involves fun—and voyeurism. Training can help people see from an alternative perspec-



**George Stoney makes a point during the White Paper Session.**

tive. Canada, New Zealand, Australia are all now training youth in media literacy.

**Gary:** Media literacy involves training the viewer—and academia can help with this.

**Steve:** I have problems with the word "unwatchable" and the notion that we need to facilitate viewer's access as well. I don't speak Spanish or watch teen wrestling, but other people do. We have an affirmative step to explain to viewers that not everything is directed to you.

**Ann:** I would like to see more discussion of the broader inclusion of cultural things into the political sphere, and ways to consider the best use of the resource.

**George:** An advantage of working at NYU is that you can walk out of the campus into the real world of Manhattan. Access exists in a real political world. We need to defend access. Ask people to compare access channels in the U.S. against mainstream television broadcasts: which looks more of what you see on the subway? Languages you hear? This gets politicians to nod. Most of us are in access because we're activists—we have our own agenda, too. We want to use access for this, too.

### 'Rethinking Access' Available on CMR website

Writing on PEG access usually focuses on economic and technological barriers to media participation: access to equipment, training, and the airwaves. In this paper, the author considers *cultural* barriers to access: popular attitudes, political approaches, and meanings associated with PEG access in mainstream media. He hopes to broaden understanding of access' social role by embedding it in larger cultural systems. To read the article, go to [communitymediareview.org](http://communitymediareview.org) or contact Bill Kirkpatrick at [mwkirkpa@students.wisc.edu](mailto:mwkirkpa@students.wisc.edu).



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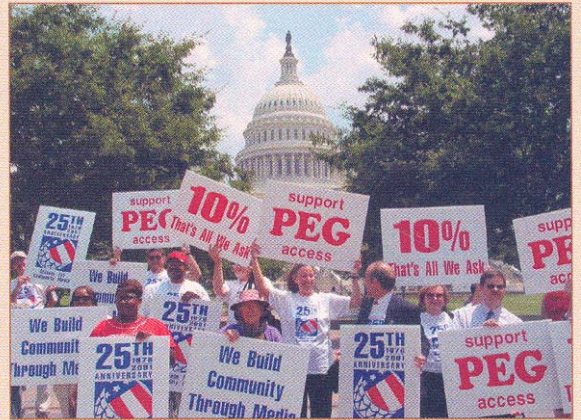
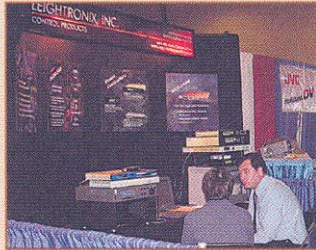
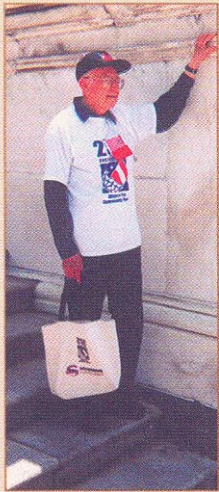
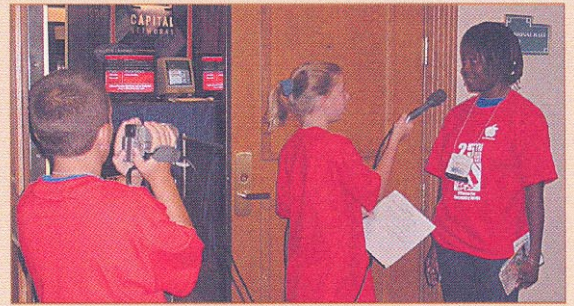
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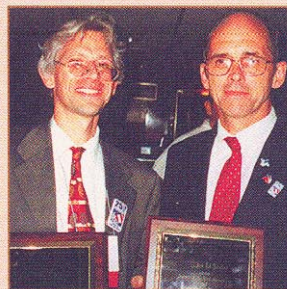
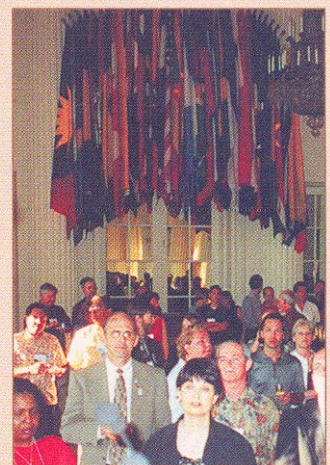
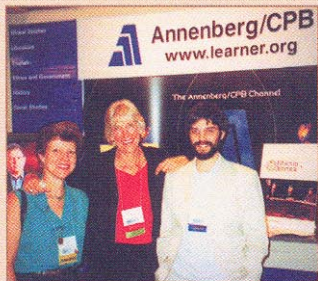
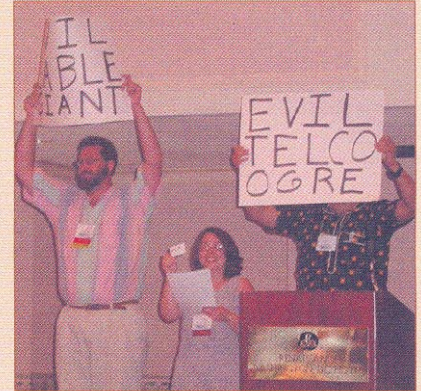
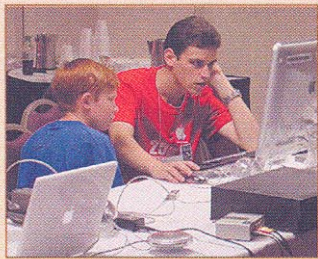
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**Happy 25th to the Alliance for Community Media!**

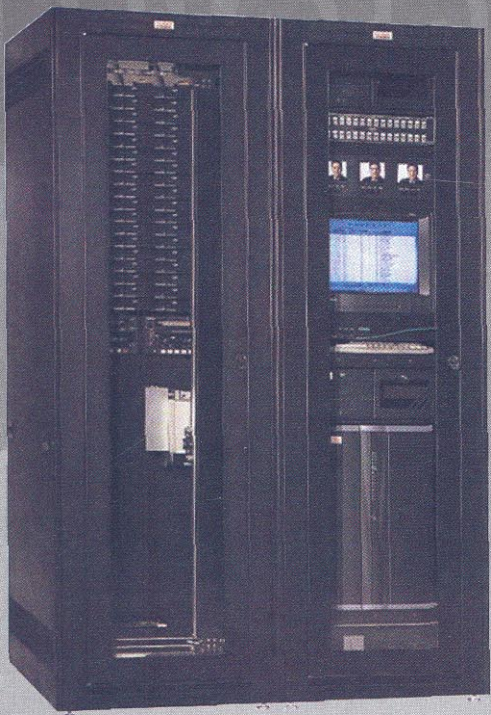




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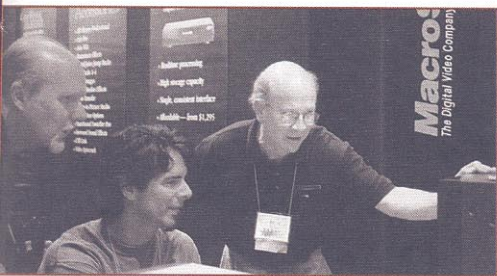


# Trade Show a Hit with Alliance Members

**'the real question was how to find time to see everything and talk to everyone.'**

BY JEFF HANSELL

Because the 2001 Trade Show at this year's conference featured over forty vendors, the real question for me was how to find time to see everything and talk to everyone. A difficult task in any year but with more new products and new program suppliers on site, it proved impossible. Memo to next year's planners: If you can carve out one slice of the conference just for the trade show—perhaps an informal cocktail hour, or an expanded breakfast—it would make it



easier to test new gear or ask those critical questions without missing a workshop or meeting.

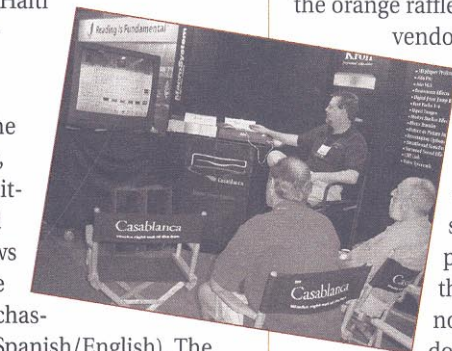
Otherwise I was most impressed with the Draco exhibit and the booth of the Organization for American States (OAS) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

Draco's Casablanca Avio and Kron seem tailor-made for a community TV station, especially for producers with little fluency with PC/MAC platform non-linear edit systems or who are new to the concept of editing itself. Based on Draco's original "Cassie," these two all-in-one edit boxes (reminds me of Quantel's Edit Box) were easy to figure out almost immediately, and did not require an in-depth understanding of PC or Mac protocol. The AVIO is so attractively featured and affordably priced it is becoming a "must" for increasing numbers of PEG access channels. The KRON (sounding like a 1950s' sci-fi flick) is more expensive, but better suited for the digital century and due for an upgrade to burn DVDs of final edits. Both models have a great feature allowing the user to specify different on-screen languages: a major selling point if your producers are more ethnically diverse.

The OAS/PAHO booth attracted me for

their combined outreach to ethnic audiences and the range of programming. The *Americas Alive* series covers a lot of ground, figuratively and literally. From peace building in Haiti to the struggle for democracy in Guatemala; from artist profiles to the *Music of Americas*, the OAS offers limited free videos and their website allows you to preview the videos before purchasing (\$20 per tape Spanish/English). The PAHO offers a few free tapes and sells an equally wide variety of PSAs, educational videos, and documentaries with titles like: *Health and Democracy*, *Faces of AIDS*, and *Street Children: Lives at Risk* (\$35 per tape, up to four languages). While most PEG centers may be limited in resources to purchase the videos, I have the idea to partner with one or two organizations in my town to help fund the purchase of additional videos and then have the groups frame the local issue or edit the video into another local show.

Following are a few reviews of the trade show. Please go the *CMR* online ([communitymediaareview.org](http://communitymediaareview.org)) for more complete versions. Submit your own trade show reviews by email to [jeff@matv.org](mailto:jeff@matv.org), and they too will be included in the *CMR* website.



one I have ever attended (out of six). It appears that vendors are finally seeing access as a serious market. The one thing that detracted from the experience was the orange raffle cards. I realize that the vendors want us to visit them, but not just to initial a raffle card. It seemed like every time a vendor was sharing the information that I needed, he or she was interrupted by people who just wanted their cards initialed but had no interest in what the vendor was saying..."

— Jim Kenny

"I liked the number and diversity of vendors. My main complaint was that some hardware vendors didn't have enough handouts... (which) would have provided useful information and prompted discussion with the representatives. I thought the signature cards were childish and saw many people going up to reps just to get them to sign the cards, and not talking about products."

— Barry Benioff

"I thought the trade show was great!

The idea of having vendors sign off at each booth for the raffle was a stroke of genius. I went to booths I passed earlier and discovered that I did need to visit them. Appearances can be deceiving and booths that I thought did not

work actually did have useful information. The Facil booth and Panasonic guys had some interesting new toys."

— Russ Hanagan

"I was blown away by the Buhl cool studio lights. Many states' power companies will give you huge rebates to shift over to these power saving lights."

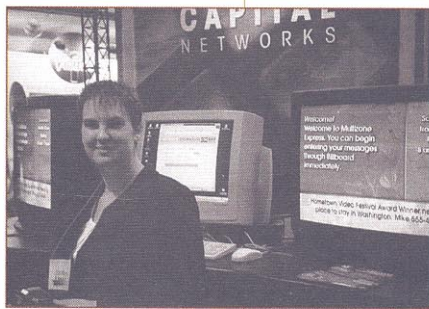
— Wendy Fleet

Jeff Hansell is executive director of Malden [MA] Access TV. Contact him at [jeff@matv.org](mailto:jeff@matv.org)

"The best vendors were Apple and Casablanca (Draco) because they engaged participants in product demos. I thought overall the trade show was a success and appreciated their support for access. More vendor-led technical workshops would be good. The Apple guy gave an excellent Final Cut-Pro workshop."

— John Luvender

"I thought the trade show was the best





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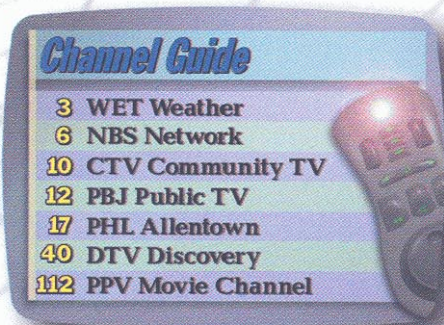
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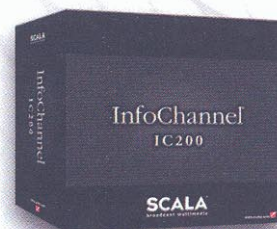


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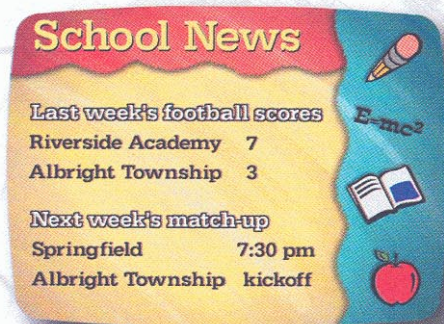


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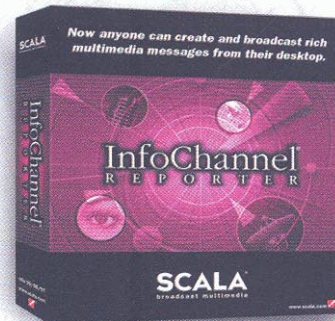


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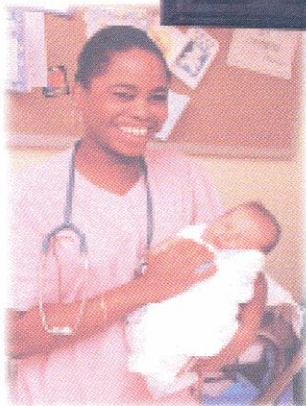
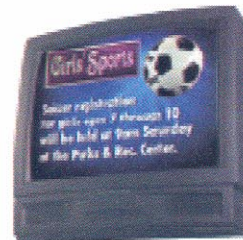
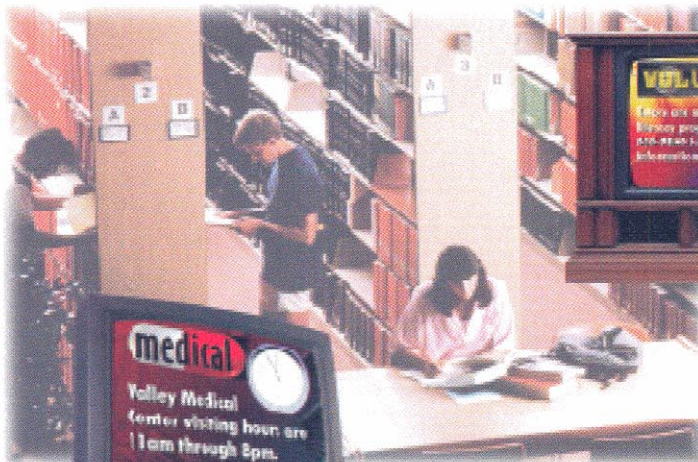
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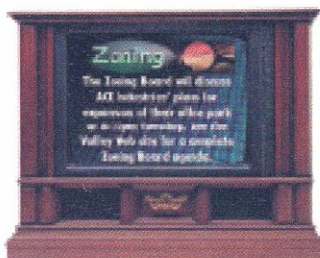
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# Cable Channel Automation Solutions

## **MVP-2000** Digital Video Player

### *The One Rack Unit Head End*

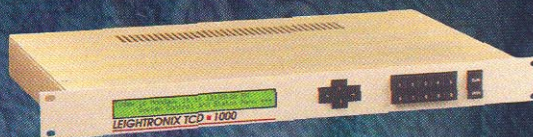
MPEG Video/Audio Playback ♦ PRO-BUS Control for up to 16 VCRs/LDPs/DVDs ♦ 4x3VAA Routing Switcher with Video Detection ♦ Control for Select External Routing Switchers ♦ Network Access and Control



## **TCD-1000** Event Controller

### *Ideal for Expanding Systems*

LGX-BUS & PRO-BUS Control for up to 64 VCRs/LDPs/DVDs ♦ Control for Select External Routing Switchers up to 99x64 ♦ GPI Inputs & Outputs



## **PRO-16** Event Controller

### *The All-In-One Playback Solution*

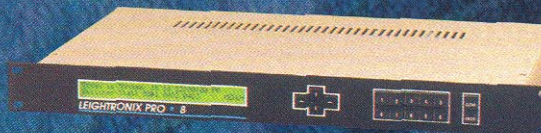
PRO-BUS Control for up to 16 VCRs/LDPs/DVDs ♦ Internal 16x4VAA Routing Switcher with Video Detection ♦ WinEM-LT Scheduling Software Included



## **PRO-8** Event Controller

### *A Smaller Version of the PRO-16*

PRO-BUS Control for up to 16 VCRs/LDPs/DVDs ♦ Internal 8x3VAA Routing Switcher with Video Detection ♦ WinEM-LT Scheduling Software Included



## **MINI-T-PRO** Event Controller

### *The Low-Cost Playback Solution*

PRO-BUS Control for up to 16 VCRs/LDPs/DVDs ♦ Internal 8x1VA Routing Switcher with Video Detection ♦ WinEM-LT Scheduling Software Included



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